GETAWAY 2 & TRUE CRIME 2 CONFIRMED! INFO INSIDE

FIRST PS3 DETAILS INSIDE

computer and video games

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Kick-ass tips for Sims Bustin' Out & SmackDown!

GRAN TURISMO 4
GOT A PS2 ? You MUST read why this awesome gasoline guzzler leaves other racers in its dust

HEAVY METAL HANDS ON
TRANSFORMERS ARMADA
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OVER 69 NEW GAMES INSIDE!
METAL GEAR: TWIN SNAKES
GTA DOUBLE PACK
KYA
MAXIMO 2
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR
NFL STREET
FINAL FANTASY X2
POKÉMON COLOSSEUM
R-RACING
BOND: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING
I-NINJA
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PANDORA TOMORROW
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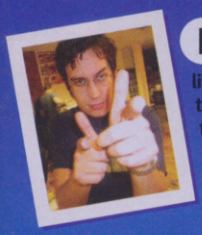
BBC

FIGHTBOX

www.fightboxthegame.com

IS THAT THE BEST YOU CAN DO?



It takes a lot to impress me. That Jonny Wilkinson? Kicks like a girl in ballet slippers. And I thought Jordan was a big girl till that fat woman won Pie Idol.

So I didn't really expect much from Transformers. After all, it's just a kids' cartoon about robots changing into cars, right? Kinda. It also happens to be one of the freshest, most explosive arcade blasters we've knackered our thumbs on in ages. It's got more big battles than Return Of The King, craps on The Matrix's special effects and is rammed with robots that change into cars and tanks! CVG went undercover in France to get you the first hands-on look – and I guarantee you won't be disappointed.

And the French lesson continues with Splinter Cell. CVG was the only mag to get behind the scenes to play the game. Our verdict? Put it this way, Paul refuses to go outside unless it's dark, and then sticks only to the shadows to stalk hot chicks, while wearing black pyjamas and night-vision goggles. See if you go loco over Sam Fisher by turning to page 108 now.

Alex Simmons Editor

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We put the squeeze on Sony's budget GT tease

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Can sly Sam out-stealth Snake? Find out here in the first mag EVER to actually play the scorching sequel

30 FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR
Many brave men have died putting THQ's soldier 'em up through our Incoming assault course. Another CVG exclusive

76 KYA: DARK LINEAGE
The world's FIRST review of Atari's huge, free-roaming, xtreme epic. Phat!

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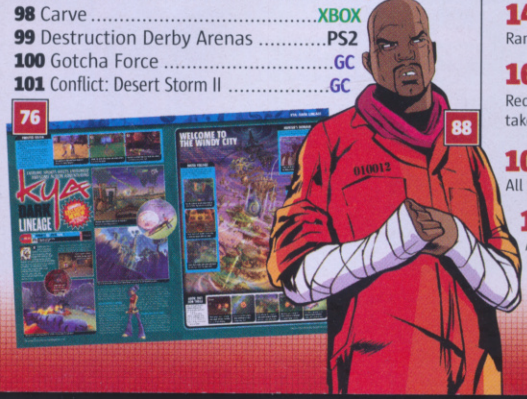

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Ever got hours into a game and realised you arsed it up at the character creation screen? You won't with our guide

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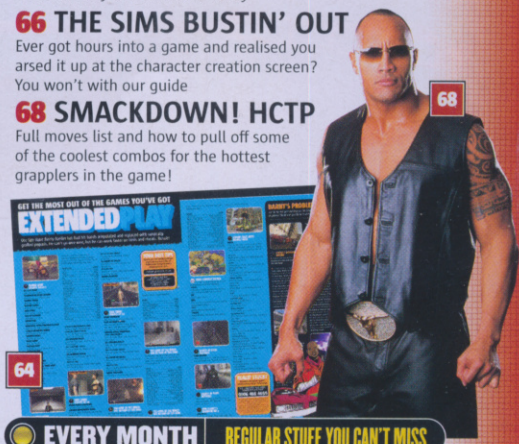

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Whatever game you buy next will be cheaper with a £3-off GAME voucher

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Rants, sycophants and pants a-plenty

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All the best gear is up for grabs in CVG

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Another steaming platter of spewings from the Cackmeister

news

HOT NEWS & GAMING GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

HITMAN CONTRACT

COMING TO PS2, XBOX & PC THIS SPRING

HIT ME BALDY ONE MORE TIME

CHILLING FIRST SHOTS OF HITMAN: CONTRACTS CREEP OUT OF THE DARKNESS

We first revealed news of Agent 47's return in the Christmas issue, but until now images of the sneaky slaphead's new adventure have been off limits.

This month Eidos has showered us with pukka pics of Hitman: Contracts, and our appetite for assassination is back with a vengeance. The hunt is back on for the blood of bad guys, and in the wake of recent disappointing sneak 'em ups such as Manhunt, Hitman's latest killing spree could steal the stealth game limelight this spring. Especially as it'll be in stores long before Metal Gear 3: Snake Eater or Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow.

THRILL OF THE KILL

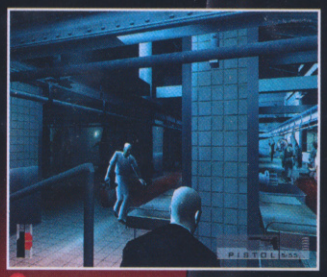
Eidos claims that this will be the most ruthless and disturbing of the Hitman games. It's expected you'll be tasked with carrying out disgusting kills, though we doubt Agent 47 will be hacking off heads Manhunt-style. Hitman's assassin may be brutal but hell, he's no butcher.

Baldy's also got a host of new killing tools to play with this time round, including new close-combat weapons and menacing additions to his firearm collection, though Eidos refuses to reveal exactly what these are right now. Along with all these new punishment playthings come fresh ways to pull off the perfect kill, and death sequences that promise to be miles more tense and shocking than before. Oh yes, we'll be revealing all these exciting features fully in our in-depth preview coming soon.

Tie all these exciting additions together with Contract's spiffy new graphics engine and you've got a deadly package just waiting to explode onto PS2, Xbox and PC this spring. No news of a GameCube version yet, but we'll keep you posted.

MORE GORE AND GUTS

Hitman's new look is bloody spectacular. Check out the river of claret!

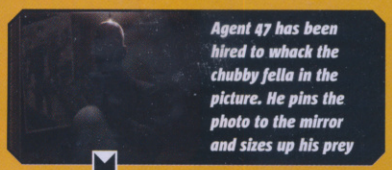


One of the missions takes place in an eerie abbatoir stuffed with gutted animals

THE HUNT IS ON

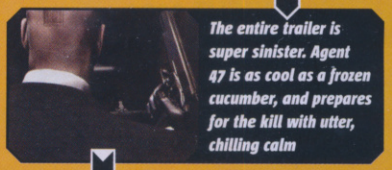
Fat, old asthmatic blokes aren't exactly renowned for their athletic prowess.

This bloater in the Hitman: Contracts trailer is a marked man, and nothing can save him now. Not even The Atkin's Diet. Visit www.hitmancontracts.com to watch the full trailer.



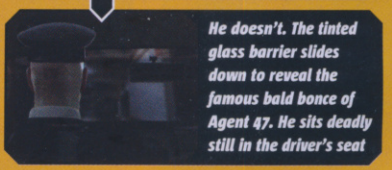
Agent 47 has been hired to whack the chubby fella in the picture. He pins the photo to the mirror and sizes up his prey

Fat man knows that he's being stalked, so he runs for his life and heads straight for his limo in a basement car park



The entire trailer is super sinister. Agent 47 is as cool as a frozen cucumber, and prepares for the kill with utter, chilling calm

Chunky butt scrambles into the back of the limo and raps on the glass to tell the driver to put the pedal to the metal



He doesn't. The tinted glass barrier slides down to reveal the famous bald bonce of Agent 47. He sits deadly still in the driver's seat

the team

WHY NOT ADOPT A CVG TEAM MEMBER? MOST OF US ARE HOUSE TRAINED

Alex Simmons
EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- NFS: Underground
- The Sims Bustin' Out
- Prince Of Persia

Alex has taken up the bizarre habit of rating everything out of ten. He's even started rating his botty plops. Texture, comfort, aroma, size! He even fishes them out of the bowl and inspects them under a microscope. Extra points are awarded for peanuts and sweetcorn. He even found an entire peach pip in there the other day. Bonus!

Pete Walker
DEP EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Rainbow Six 3
- Full Spectrum Warrior
- Baldur's Gate 2

Pete's been blitzing the January sales this month, hunting for cheap military clothing and accessories. He managed to pick up a scud missile, tiger tank, and thermal camo longjohns in a 'three for two' deal from ASDA – it's amazing what they stock nowadays. We all prayed he'd buy a nuclear bunker to hide in, but sadly Woolies were all out.

Lee Skittrell
REVIEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Ruby
- Kya: Dark Lineage
- GTA: Vice City

Lee's got itchy feet. He's like a shark – if he stops moving he reckons he'll die. He went to make a cup of coffee the other day and ended up on a plane to Cape Town in South Africa! Luckily, he was back in time for the Pop Idol final, which he watched while doing a Flatley on a dance mat. Now he's got blisters the size of button mushrooms.

Mike Cooper
NEWS EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- GTA: Vice City
- Pro Evo 3
- MGS: Twin Snakes

Can you believe that looking like this Mike still failed his League Of Gentleman audition? We've suggested he keeps trying though as the rocky road to stardom is a difficult path. We hear porn legend Ron Jeremy is looking for a protege, and Coops reckons his man enough. We don't want to see the footage though. That would be wrong.

NEWS NUGGETS

UNMISSABLE BITE-SIZED STORIES FROM ALL OVER THE PLANET

CASTLEVANIA COCK UP

STOP PRESS

A finished copy of Castlevania only appeared at CVG an hour before we finished the mag. Bugger! Obviously we wanted to bring you the ultimate review this issue, but you'll have to wait 'til next month for the lowdown on Konami's killer monster romp.

TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF WHO KNOWS?

Nick Kang will return for more no-holds-barred peacekeeping in a sequel to True Crime. But this time, says Activision's main man Robert Kotick, the action will not be set in LA but in 'other cities'. Where, we know not.

DUKE NUKEM FOREVER, AND EVER, AND EVER

Take Two's most famous first-person shooter has been in development for eons, dodging release dates like Neo dodges bullets. Developer 3D Realms replies "when it's done" whenever asked about a release date. However, this month publisher Take Two's stated the game will be "completed sometime at the end of 2004 or the beginning of 2005".

STOP PRESS

UNCOVERED

PlayStation 3

THE WHEELS ARE IN MOTION, AND NOTHING CAN STAND IN ITS WAY!

- GAME ANNOUNCED
- CHIP IN PRODUCTION
- 3D ENGINE IN DEVELOPMENT

The games industry grapevine has been alive with chatter this month. News has surfaced that many developers are already working on titles for the next wave of home consoles, with PlayStation 3 mentioned most frequently.

British developer Climax has been the most outspoken, tantalising us with the announcement of a PS3 game in progress. Codenamed Avalon, it's also planned for Xbox 2. No details have been revealed as to what type of game it is, though Shaun Hargreaves, lead programmer on the title, has gone on the record saying the game's in a "remarkably advanced stage of development", adding that "a fully online prototype" is already in place.

As well as the shock news of Avalon, Sony and Toshiba have announced their intention to begin production on a sample version of the CELL chip, which will be the heart and soul of the machine. The two companies will start manufacturing them in March.

Other PS3 related rumblings have uncovered news that Gregg Tavares, one of the main programmers on Jak & Daxter, has left developer Naughty Dog to start work on a PS3 3D engine.

Stop by next month for all the latest facts and hot goss on Sony's monster console.

If Nintendo's flip-top fancy boy even attempted to animate the 3D character seen on the left it'd implode under the strain

SMOOTH OPERATOR

SONY'S PSP SHOWS OFF ITS SEXY CURVES

It was at number one in last month's news feature 100 Reasons Why 2004 Will Be Gaming Heaven. Yes, Sony's forthcoming handheld console, the PSP, is the hottest piece of hardware on the horizon. And we've tracked down an image of what it can do.

Don't be fooled by the dullness of the image, this is exciting stuff. We all know that PSP will be capable of playing games with loads of polygons, but what's brilliant about Sony's handheld is that it uses a piece of technology called Surface Tessellation to smooth the edges off. So instead of ugly blockheads, you'll have gorgeously curvy character models skipping across your impressive 4.5-inch backlit screen.

No doubt Sony will unveil a proper screenshot of a PSP game soon. See it first in Planet CVG.

PS2 AND XBOX

FOUR FISTS, ONE RING, OUCH!

TAKE A RINGSIDE SEAT FIGHT NIGHT 2004. A BRAND NEW BOXER FROM SPORTS GAME LEGEND EA

First look

■ EA has chosen to rename the Knockout Kings boxing series as Fight Night. The game's producer, Kudo Tsunoda, told us that the reason for bestowing a new

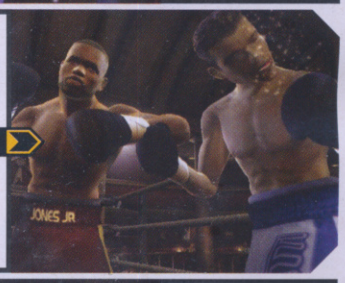
NEW KNOCKOUT KING

identity upon the series is because Fight Night 2004 is a completely different type of boxing game with many all-new gameplay elements. Sounds intriguing.

■ Fight Night's innovative control system promises ultimate fist freedom. You control punches mid-flight with the right analog stick. The left half of the stick

STICK IT TO HIM

controls your left fist, and the right half commands your right. Holding R1 makes you block, giving you the ability to deflect specific hits with a well-placed parry.



■ Career mode sounds awesome. Your rise to glory stretches over 20 years, with six weight categories. You have to fight off old champs, tough it out with reckless

CHUMP TO CHAMP

rookies and complete mad challenges to boost your stats. There are 32 licensed boxers, including legends like Sugar Ray Leonard. Plus it's online for PS2.

EXECUTIONS FOR EVERYBODY

MANHUNT CONFIRMED FOR XBOX AND PC

Everyone knows that putting a plastic bag on your head is foolish and dangerous, but no one mentioned that putting one on someone else's head could be fun.

Rockstar North's outrageous executioner has kicked up stacks of controversy on PS2, and soon Xbox and PC owners will be able to experience what all the fuss is about first-hand.

It's doubtful that Rockstar will modify or improve the gameplay

It has just been announced that both versions will be appearing on UK shelves in Autumn 2004. There's no news of any extra features in either game. However they're bound to receive an extra splash of graphical spit and polish much in the same way that the new versions of Vice City have.

STOP PRESS

THE GETAWAY 2

SONY'S COCKNEY GANGSTER BOWLS BACK INTO TOWN

OUT LATE 2004

It's official! The London-based bruiser is getting tooled up for a second violent outburst on PS2.

You'll have to wait 'til the end of the year for it to stomp onto UK shelves, so as you can guess at this early stage, Sony is keeping details of the game seriously under wraps. Saying that, we did manage to squeeze a couple of bite-sized nuggets of news out.

Team Soho, developer of the original, is back to whip the sequel into shape. Also, it's come to light that several of the nobodies who provided voices for the last game won't be lending their vocal talents to the follow-up. No loss there, but this suggests that Sony has a few top trumps hidden up its baggy sleeves in terms of voice acting. Which is hardly surprising considering that Vice City, True Crime and DRIV3R (see page six) have all hooked in top Hollywood actors.

Next month we'll bring you the first stunning pics of The Getaway 2 running riot on PS2. Don't miss it!

Graeme Boyd
STAFF WRITER
CURRENT FAVES
- GT4 Prologue
- Champ Man 4
- NFL Street

Graeme attempted to fly home to the bonnie highlands of Scotland this month, to celebrate 100 years of flight. He strapped a couple of ironing boards to his arms and flapped off Big Ben, cheerily riding the chilly north wind. He made it to the M1 services but got distracted by Virtua Cop 3 in the arcade and binged on Burger King instead.

Paul Davies
CONTRIBUTING ED
CURRENT FAVES
- Sphincter Smell 2
- Pro Evo 3
- Gotcha Force

They say that you get nothing in this world for free. Not if you live in Paul's world. Only yesterday he ponced two quid off Mike to buy a pork samosa, got a free handjob from a tramp, a free haircut from that bloke who sweeps up the hair, and a free punch in the kidneys from Jaime for being such a total spawney get!

Jaime Smith
ART EDITOR
CURRENT FAVES
- Pokémon Pinball
- Pro Evo 3
- SF2 Collector's Edition

Jaime reckons he's a bit tasty with his fists and has been taking on all-comers at Hyper Street Fighter II. To psyche out his rivals he painted himself green, wore tight speedos and refused to shave his pant moustache. It worked! No one beat him cos no one would go near him. But then, that's nothing new – we normally like to keep a safe distance.

Mike Newson
DESIGNER
CURRENT FAVES
- Manhunt
- Prince Of Persia
- R Racing

Our beloved Jenny has flown the coop leaving a gaping, oozing wound from which the supperating pustule that is Mike Newson burst forth, Alien-style. Don't be fooled by his friendly grin and warm demeanour, he's a rotting man-blister who needs lancing from the face of humanity. Makes a mean cuppa, though, so we like having him around.

Andrew Holmes
PRODUCTION BLOKE
CURRENT FAVES
- Broken Sword III
- Myst III
- Legends Of Wrestling III

Andrew is obsessed with the number three. Every game he plays has to have a three in it, and every album he listens to has to be the third from the band. We blame it on his love of the third and final installment in the Lord Of The Rings trilogy, but maybe it's simply because he's a big freak. He's even writing his third book, possibly called 'Three'.

I WANT YOU TO HIT ME AS HARD AS YOU CAN

The stupidest rule of Fight Club is to transform one of the most intelligent movies of the Nineties into a mindless, crap-looking beat 'em up for PS2. Fight Club will be coming to Sony's console in the second half of 2004.

FOUR SWORDS PLUS

Zelda: Four Swords and Tetra's Trackers, first shown at last year's E3 show will now be bundled together on one GameCube disc titled Legend Of Zelda: Four Swords Plus. Also, another new Zelda title called Shadow Battle will appear on the disc.

UK'S SEXIEST GAMER

Gobby TV presenter Vernon Kay recently hosted the UK's Sexiest Gamer awards ceremony. Over 1000 vain wanabees contested for the crown, with 18 year-old gingaaah Rachel Doherty (right) winning sexiest female.

Hot or Not?

PS3

PLAYSTATION 3

A new dawn of gaming is fast approaching, and the first details of PlayStation 3 are creeping over the horizon. The future of games couldn't be brighter, and it's no surprise that Sony is generating most of the excitement.

SPLINTER CELL 2

CVG's Paul Davies came back from his visit to France to play Pandora Tomorrow a changed man. He returned and wouldn't stop preaching the gospel according to Sam Fisher at us. Now we're all disciples to the sequel and can't wait to get our hands bloody, especially with online multiplayer modes.

DEADLY DOLLS

A company has manufactured a series of 30cm-tall Capcom Vs SNK 2 figures, including brilliant plastic recreations of Iori, Terry, Ken and Ryu. All with multiple moving parts. Visit www.high-dream.com/capcomvssnk2 if you fancy getting hold of one of them.

2004

GC 2004 LINE-UP

These are all the GC games that Nintendo is hoping to thrill us with in 2004... 007: Everything Or Nothing (it's on every other console anyway), Kirby Air Ride (crap), FF: Crystal Chronicles (fair enough), MGS: The Twin Snakes (remake), Sonic Heroes (yawn!), Pokémon Channel (bizarre kiddy spin-off), Mario Golf (not bad), Pokémon Colosseum (pretty good), Phantasy Star Online III (nobody's interested anymore). Hardly a hot bed of excitement!

MANHUNT

It's alarming how quickly you become numb to slicing off heads with a cheese wire, stabbing people in the eyes with shards of glass and pasting brains all over the walls. Manhunt's shock factor has already worn off, and all we're left with is a pretty standard stealth outing.

COMING TO PS2 AND XBOX IN MARCH

DRIV3R

TANNER HITS TWO WHEELS AND RIPS UP THE STREETS WITH STYLE

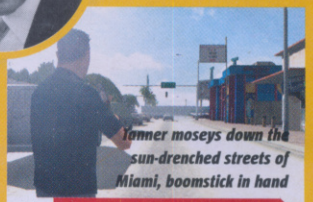
ON YOUR BIKE

Smash through destructible scenery and watch your car suffer instant damage

Get a tissue and start mopping up that drool. These are the world's first shots of Tanner riding a hog, and he somehow manages to look even cooler than Tommy from Vice City.

This the most stunning batch of pics that we've seen of DRIV3R to date. Check out the dust clouds, the mad wheel spins and the mind-bogglingly detailed environments. Roll on March.

Vice City got its motorbike action spot on, but DRIV3R will have to make bike-riding even more spectacular and thrilling if it hopes to compete with biggest thug on the block and become a legend



Tanner moseys down the sun-drenched streets of Miami, boomstick in hand

HOLLYWOOD HARDNUT PLAYS TANNER

Atari has announced that it has signed Reservoir Dogs madman and Kill Bill assassin Michael Madsen to provide the voice of Tanner.

Pulp Fiction's Ving Rhames will also lend his gravely voice to one of the characters. As will Mickey Rourke and Michelle Rodriguez.

THE NEWS IN PICTURES

A LINK TO THE FUTURE

Illustration: Team Artonomy © Computer And Video Games

Nintendo

I HOPE AUNTIE KEPT THE RECEIPT.

SO I CAN GET MY HANDS ON THESE.

AMAZING GAMECUBE GAMES FROM £19.99.

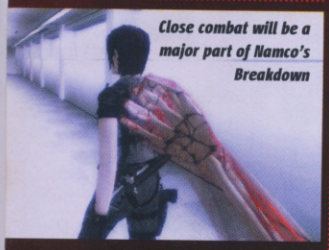
PLAYER'S CHOICE

NINTENDO GAMECUBE™

Illustration: Team Artonomy © Computer And Video Games

The Hot Seat

Breakdown producer Hirofumi Kami is camera shy (hence no photo), but he loves to gab about his upcoming Xbox actioner



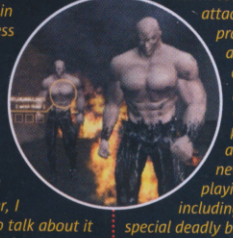
Close combat will be a major part of Namco's Breakdown

Q CVG: Explain how Breakdown is different to shooters?

A Kami: *What makes Breakdown unique is its hand-to-hand combat system. Unlike other games in which hand-to-hand combat only serves as a backup for weapons-based combat, Breakdown has been created so the main mode of attack is hand-to-hand combat using a first-person viewpoint. The earlier part of the game involves more shooting than hand-to-hand combat, however players must familiarise themselves with the hand-to-hand combat as it will become a necessary skill in later stages of the game. Another key feature of Breakdown is its action-adventure-type game control. Players are required to jump, climb, hang or crawl depending on the situation they are in so they can progress in the game.*

Q CVG: What's the plot?

A *Kami: The game script is a key feature of any successful and fun game. However, I would prefer not to talk about it in detail. I can introduce some of the main talking points in the opening sequence of the game... Derrick Cole (the player) wakes up in a laboratory, suffering from amnesia. He does not understand the situation he is in, but it appears that he is involved in some kind of experiment. Two conflicting forces are trying to take control of the laboratory. One group is a military group; the other group consists of mysterious looking beings known as T'lan Warriors (possibly non-human), who will attack any human on sight. Without knowing why, Derrick is attacked by both groups. A mysterious woman named Alex, who seems to know what is going on in the laboratory, helps him. Alex is the first character Derrick meets, and nothing much is known about her other than the fact that she is on Derrick's side. Derrick seems to have promised her something important in the past, but he does not remember. Alex knows who the T'lan are, but why she knows these facts remains a mystery. As Derrick and Alex work their way through the laboratory, the player will begin to understand the mysteries surrounding the laboratory, the T'lan and the military forces. The special powers that Derrick contains within him gradually become more apparent. This is one of biggest mysteries for the player in the early stages of the game.*



Q CVG: Hand-to-hand fighting in first-person games have been confusing in the past. How have you made it work in Breakdown?

A *Kami: We were planning to implement numerous stunning moves during the earlier development stages. However, we decided to stick to realistic moves to preserve the play experience. We have implemented some special effects, such as the screen shuddering slightly when Derrick receives a deadly blow, to bring even more reality to the game.*

Q CVG: What kind of weapons can we expect to see in the game?

A *Kami: At the moment, I can only tell you that a handgun, machine gun and rocket launcher are available as weapons. However, there are more weapons that become available as the game progresses. Although it may not be seen as a weapon, we have created numerous hand-to-hand combat manoeuvres. The basic moves are kick and punch – as you'd expect – but various combinations of the two attacks are also available. The player is able to learn complex combo attacks as the game progresses, thus adding a new dimension to the play experience. I do hope all the players will be able to find the new moves while playing the game, including some of the special deadly blows as well.*

> *"HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT BECOMES A NECESSARY SKILL IN LATER STAGES OF THE GAME"*

Q CVG: Are there plans for a multiplayer version of the game or is this strictly a single-player affair?

A *Kami: This is a single-player game only. Sorry.*

PANASONIC GAMECUBE CANNED

Back in December 2001 Panasonic launched a hybrid DVD-playing GameCube. However, news just in has revealed that Panasonic has ceased production of the metallic mongrel due to poor sales.

PSX A RUNAWAY SUCCESS

Sony's PSX console has just launched in Japan and is selling like PS2s, with its giant hard-drive and DVD recording capability. Apparently, it nearly sold out within its first week of release.

First Look

Each of the main characters possesses unique magical abilities, and there'll be masses of new spells to cast this time round

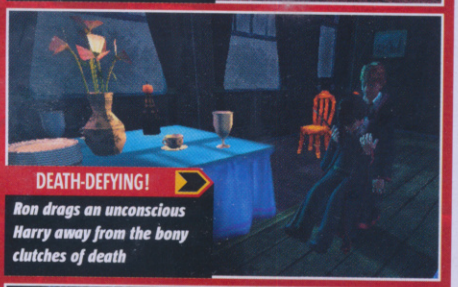
TWO-PLAYER TRICKERY

You can also challenge a mate in multiplayer, as well as the single-player mode

FIRST LOOK!

POTTER TAKES NO PRISONERS

EA REVEALS FIRST IMAGES OF HARRY'S LATEST SPELL-BINDING ESCAPADE



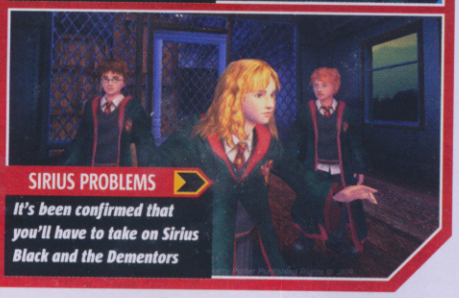
DEATH-DEFYING!

Ron drags an unconscious Harry away from the bony clutches of death

Come May you'll be able to wave the wands of Harry, Ron or Hermione in the latest Hogwarts-set videogame, Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban, which will be appearing on PS2, Xbox, GC, GBA and PC.

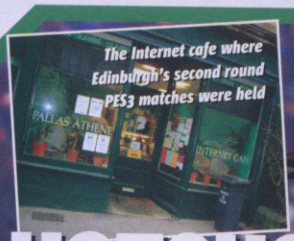
This is the first time that you get to play as, switch between, and combine the skills of each member of Hogwart's most famous trio.

It's good to see that EA has gone to the bother of changing the structure of the gameplay, because The Chamber Of Secrets was by no means a thrill-a-minute journey. Let's just hope that some work is done on the visuals before launch, because these new pics highlight the fact that the graphics aren't any better than those of previous Potter adventures.



SIRIUS PROBLEMS

It's been confirmed that you'll have to take on Sirius Black and the Dementors



The Internet cafe where Edinburgh's second round PES3 matches were held

HOTSHOTS!

PES3 NATIONAL LEAGUE HOTS UP AFTER SECOND ROUND OF MATCHES

STAR PLAYERS

Stuart Cronin (left) is many a pundit's tip for a Champions League position

It's early doors in the Pro Evolution Soccer 3 National League – we're still only in the second month – but some serious contenders are emerging for places in next summer's grand final.

CVG travelled to the Pallas Athene Internet Cafe to see the Edinburgh league (we'll be visiting all the 'grounds' over the course of the season), where Stuart Cronin from Midlothian was leading after five wins out of five on the first day.

The 16-year-old – who, like many of the top players, uses France – continued his good form with four more back-to-back victories, including a 2-1 comeback against another high-flyer, Gordon Wright. Stuart dropped his first points of the tournament with a drab and disappointing goalless draw against Omar Sharara, but still looks odds-on for a top four finish.

Another player to watch is 19-year-old Ho Yan Cheung. He played his first games of the tournament, winning five and drawing one - enough to send him straight into fifth place.

Unluckiest man of the day was undoubtedly Andrew Flintoff (not to be confused with the cricketer) 23, who made a four-hour trip from Sunderland with his girlfriend, and didn't win any of his seven

VICE CITY BACKLASH

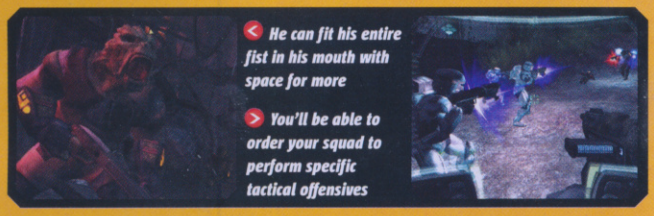
The "Kill the Haitians" line of dialogue in Vice City has sparked a fierce protest from New York's Haitian community, who claimed it could incite violence against them. They were so angry they took their complaint to NY Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who demanded publisher Take Two remove the phrase from the game. Which it did.

REPUBLIC GOES PUBLIC

FIRST SHOTS OF STAR WARS: REPUBLIC COMMANDO

Lucas Arts has unveiled in-game images of its next Wars biggie, and it's safe to say it's looking proper bo!

Little is known about Republic Commando, apart from the fact that it's a team-based tactical shooter that uses the Unreal game engine. But this handsome pair of screenshots should have anyone with a soft spot for Star Wars salivating like an out-of-breath Taun Taun.



He can fit his entire fist in his mouth with space for more

You'll be able to order your squad to perform specific tactical offensives

FIRST SCREENSHOTS

VIRTUA FIGHTER RPG

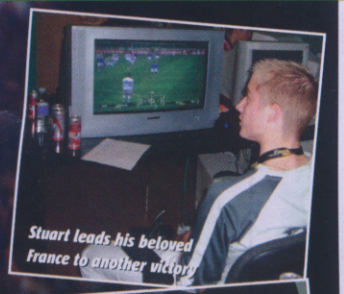
SEGA'S SERIOUS BRUISER GOES ALL KIDDIE

ON PS2 AND GC THIS SUMMER

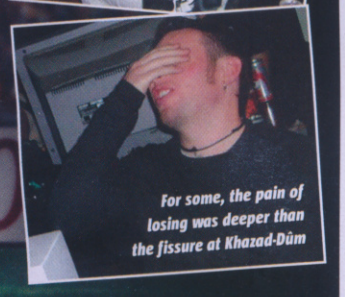
This is the first time explosive special effects have appeared in a VF game

Do a Spidey and swing from lampposts and other objects using your pink plasma rope

Doesn't look like the fighting will be as tactical as we're used to in VF



Stuart leads his beloved France to another victory



For some, the pain of losing was deeper than the fissure at Khazad-Dûm

games! We admire his dedication – but not his Pro Evo skills!

The star of the second day of games at Harrow in North London was Femi Paul from Beckton who, we're told, was "on fire". Not literally though. The 19-year-old – another player who uses France – went straight into fourth place in the league following a draw and six wins, including a 7-1 thrashing.

Leader in Liverpool is Shui Ip, 23, who followed his five first-day wins with a further six victories and a single loss in December. The loss, against Robert Leek, came from a corner in the very last minute of the game. Unlucky my son!

You find full reports, results and tables from all the leagues at www.pesleague.co.uk

REGISTER NOW!

MORE LEAGUE PLACES AVAILABLE! ADDITIONAL NEWCASTLE LEAGUE!

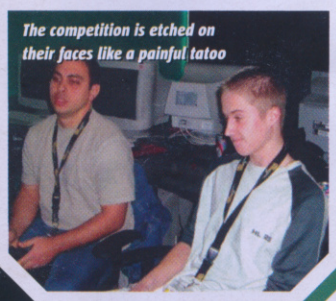
Think you're really good at PES3? Want to take on the best players in the country with the chance of becoming UK champion and picking-up some HUGE prizes? Well here's your chance.

For a short time only, we're re-opening player registration for the Pro Evo Socer 3 National League. Where capacity allows, we're admitting additional players into the nine existing leagues at Harrow, Chingford, Birmingham, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Stevenage, Southend and Bath, as well as a brand new league opening in Newcastle in February. Yowsers!

You only have to attend three match days between now and June (20 games in the season; maximum 7 per visit), so you still have a good chance of qualifying for the finals in the summer.

If you want to get involved, all you need to do is register at www.pesleague.co.uk. You'll also find more details there including fixtures, venue locations and rules.

Player registration re-opens on the site on January 7, and places will be allocated on a strict 'first come, first served' basis. So hurry!



The competition is etched on their faces like a painful tatoo

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY BARBARIANS, GLADIATORS AND WARRIORS!

BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE ORIGINAL!

THERE IS ONLY ONE...

CAULDRON

TDK

HELL-RAISING HALF-LIFE 2 SHOTS

Half-Life 2 was all set to launch last September until a spectacularly retarded prat nicked off with a portion of Valve's upcoming show-stopper. All signs now point to a summer 2004 release. Until then, here are a bunch of mind-melting screenshots...

CHALLENGE CVG GOES XBOX LIVE

From next issue we'll be using Xbox Live games for our monthly challenge, and there'll be amazing Xbox prizes up for grabs. Don't worry, you don't need Xbox Live in your home to challenge us. We'll set it all up. See page 16 for more details.

Playtime Bullies

FIGHTING FOR SPACE ON THE OFFICE CONSOLE THIS MONTH

PS2 MOST PLAYED!

GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE

Graeme takes it all too seriously. Alex caught him in the office this weekend playing GT4 Prologue wearing a helmet and a fireproof racing suit, sat in a cardboard Subaru constructed out toilet roll tubes.

XBOX MOST PLAYED!

DEUS EX INVISIBLE WAR

We're crap at decision making, so Invisible War has been a compelling nightmare for us this month – there are so many ways to play out a mission. But we still can't decide what our character should look like.

CUBE MOST PLAYED!

POKEMON COLOSSEUM

We always know when Lee and Paul are enjoying a Pokémon game because neither of them eats for a fortnight, as was the case this month. Then again they're David Blaine fans, so it might be a pile of crap.

GBA MOST PLAYED!

MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA

Mario's name has been dirtied to promote stacks of lazy spin-offs like the Party series. So it's great to see Nintendo's pipe-probing maestro in an exciting and original adventure. The whole double-team thing is wicked.

PC MOST PLAYED!

FAR CRY

The enemies in Far Cry are really clever. So clever in fact that we engaged one in an impromptu general knowledge quiz and lost embarrassingly. To add insult to injury he called over his egghead friends to slaughter us mercilessly with heavy machine guns.

Not even Harry could match the raw gaming skillz of our British Quidditch World Cup champ

BATTLE OF THE BROOMSTICKS

CVG POTTER EXPERT PAUL IBBETT HITS THE UK QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP NATIONAL FINALS

In our Christmas issue we ran a competition to find a Harry Potter fanatic who's also a wizard with words to report on the Quidditch World Cup finals.

We found him! Paul Ibbett is his name, and what he doesn't know about Quidditch... hold on, actually there's nothing he doesn't know about the magical sport of broomsticks and Bludgers. Here's how things unfolded on that eventful day at the home of the Harry Potter game...

This is how the semi-finals and final were played

SPECIAL REPORT BY PAUL IBBETT

Our roving reporter Paul gave the winners and losers a proper grilling

On November 29 Electronic Arts held the UK finals of The Harry Potter Quidditch World Cup Championships at their European HQ in Chertsey, England.

The competition was between 21 UK finalists who had each won their respective regional competition.

Upon arrival at the EA Studios we were greeted by a wide variety of witches, wizards and even moving trees! We entered the competition area via the Forbidden Forest with statues, moving shadows and mist around our feet. EA had done a great job of making it look like Hogwarts castle, with a reconstruction of the Great Hall, the lake, Nimbus 2000s and real owls.

The competitors played for positions in the semi-finals by gaining the highest amount of points in individual games in three qualifying rounds.

All competitors played very hard to win their place in the semi-finals – in fact, some of the games were so close that two play-offs were needed to decide the fourth semi-finalist.

Both semi-finals were played as two-player games with the semi-finalists playing against each other on EA's impressively large screen. The finalists then played a nail-biting match, with Ryan Quimber's Gryffindor just beating Stephen Hardy's Slytherin to the coveted Golden Snitch.

The best of British! The pride of Potter! These 21 players are the best in the UK

The atmosphere was so tense you could smell it. It whiffed like roast beef

All contestants came away with muchos Potter goodies

All the semi-finalists received Golden Snitches and copies of the game on GBA. Ryan also received a Nintendo GameCube and is going to appear in the new Harry Potter game, The Prisoner Of Azkaban!

Ryan told CVG that he thought he'd done well for a 10 year-old, and thinks he'll represent the UK well at the World Finals. What's his opinion of the Quidditch game? "It's got excellent graphics and a good storyline".

The runner-up Stephen Hardy said after the final that he felt it was really nerve-wracking, but he was not too disappointed because "everyone's literally a winner"!

"WHAT DOES NOT DESTROY ME, MAKES ME STRONGER" NIETZSCHE

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* Available from February 2004 for Xbox™ and PC CD-Rom. Coming in March 2004 for PlayStation®2 and Nintendo GameCube. | **Online for PC and Xbox™ Live™ | Screenshots taken from the PC and Xbox version.

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Charts

UK TOP 20 BESTSELLERS

FIND OUT WHICH GAMES ARE FLYING OFF THE SHELVES AND INTO YOUR CONSOLES, HOW THEY SCORED IN CVG AND WHAT THEY'RE ALL ABOUT. YOU LOT SURE ARE LUCKY!

ChartTrack — The official UK weekly leisure software charts ©2002 ELSPA Ltd, compiled by ChartTrack, with the name ELSPA acting as a link to our website www.elspa.com

POSITION	MOVE	GAME	FORMAT/S	CVG SCORE	SUMMARY	LAST WEEK	WEEKS IN CHART
1		MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN (EA)	PS2 XB GC	6	What better way to kick-start New Year than by reliving Pearl Harbor and shooing down Kamikaze dive-bombers?	1	3
2	▲	NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND (EA)	PS2 XB GC	9	Fit cars, fast women – yep that way round – and more accessories than a gaggle of Essex girls on a night out	3	4
3	▼	FIFA 2004 (EA)	PS2 XB PC PSONE	8	If FIFA 2004 and PES3 had a keepie-up competition, FIFA would manage about 23, and PES3 would go on forever	2	8
4	▲	THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN (VIVENDI)	PS2 XB GC PC	7	Homer and friends treat Springfield as if it were Vice City. A lightweight alternative to Tommy Vercetti's outing	5	2
5	▼	LORD OF THE RINGS: RETURN OF THE KING (EA)	PS2 XB GBA PC	7	If it were as good as the movie it'd be an all-time classic. Sadly, it's more on par with Return Of The Killer Tomatoes	4	5
6	▲	TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA (ACTIVISION)	PS2 XB GC	8	Nick Kang still plays second fiddle to Vice City's Tommy Vercetti, but people must like policing	7	6
7	▼	TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND (ACTIVISION)	PS2 XB GBA GC	8	Seeing Tony off his board is a bit like seeing Jordan with her tits covered. It's freaky and makes you feel uncomfortable	6	4
8	▲	FINDING NEMO (THQ)	PS2 XB PC GC	-	Frankly we couldn't give a shrimp's cock about this game. If you bought it you're a mong. Mong!	10	11
9	▼	HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP (EA)	PS2 XB PC GBA GC	7	It hardly redefines sports games, but this quality recreation of a nonsense activity is actually decent	8	6
10	NEW	TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES (ATARI)	PS2 XB PC GBA GC	4	When Arnie says "I'll be back" in his films, someone should tell him not to bother. The movie was average. This blows	-	1
11	▼	EYETOY: PLAY (SONY)	PS2	-	Sony's set-top party-starter has been in the top 20 for 24 weeks now. It's even more powerful than the eye of Sauron	9	24
12	▲	MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE (ROCKSTAR)	PS2 XB PC	9	Manhunt may have embarrassingly dropped out of the charts, but Max Payne is still flying the Rockstar flag	20	4
13	▼	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER: SEASON 03/04 (EIDOS)	PC	8	If you find numbers mildly arousing and have anything near an addictive personality, wave goodbye to your life	11	4
14	▲	GRAN TURISMO 3 – PLATINUM (SONY)	PS2	10	Sony's motoring masterpiece is almost two years old and it still wipes the floor with every other PS2 racer available	15	64
15	▼	DANCE: UK (BIG BEN)	PS2 PSONE	-	The eight-way dancer keeps on grooving, but drops a few places from last month. The beat is getting a bit repetitive	13	8
16	▲	MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!! (NINTENDO)	GC	9	With two exclamation marks in the title it must be good!! And it is!! Honestly!! It's probably the best version yet!!	17	5
17	NEW	TOTAL CLUB MANAGER (EA)	PS2 XB GC	-	It's totally compatible with FIFA 2004. Teams that you've created in either game can be transferred to the other	-	1
18	▼	WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN (THQ)	PS2	9	We're still ripping off each other's clothes as the women of the WWE. It feels so good to wear a bra and panties	16	6
19	▼	PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 (KONAMI)	PS2	10	Pro Evo's balls have dropped. The way things are going it could get relegated from the top 20 next month! A disgrace	12	9
20	▼	XIII (UBISOFT)	PS2 XB PC GC	8	Ubisoft's cel-shaded shooter fails to make an impact in stores, but it's miles better than MOH: Rising Sun	14	2

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CVG MOST WANTED

SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW (XB, PS2, GC, PC)
Paul: "This master class in stealth has delivered a knockout blow to CVG from almost nowhere. Online multiplayer is frickin' 'mazing!"

GRAN TURISMO 4 (PS2)
Graeme: "When I started GT4 Prologue up, without a word of a lie, I creamed my pants. The full version is going to be the ultimate driving experience."

DRIV3R (PS2, XB)
Mike: "Rockstar can stick Vice City up its flabby arse, because Driv3r is all I'm interested in from now on. Actually, I'm lying, but that needn't concern you."

CASTLEVANIA (PS2)
Lee: "Whips, demons and buckets of blood are what this is all about. Oh, and the game plays like sex with Anna K... mummy!

HALF-LIFE 2 (PC, XB)
Pete: "By the time it comes out I'll be so old that I'll need a colostomy bag. Which is good because I won't ever need to leave my chair to do number ones or twos."

READER'S MOST WANTED

We like Paul Hannon, and it has nothing to do with the fact that he sent us Belgian chocolates at Christmas.

1. PLAYSTATION PORTABLE (PSP)
"I've never been as excited by anything as much as PSP. It's the future."
2. KILLZONE (PS2)
"I've just got broadband, but Socom isn't my thing. This looks like it's going to be up there with Halo 2"
3. METAL GEAR SOLID 3: TWIN SNAKES (PS2)
"I'm such a fan that I've got my own MGS site. This is gonna be amazing."
4. GRAN TURISMO 4 (PS2)
"I can't believe how amazing this looks and feels. Can't wait!"
5. CASTLEVANIA (PS2)
"I read Lee's preview in the Christmas issue and I'm just as excited as him."

Send us a photo of yourself and a list of the five games you're most excited about with 15 words on each explaining why. **Reader's Most Wanted, CVG, Dennis Publishing Ltd, 9 Dallington Street, London EC1V 0BQ. Email: mailbag.cvg @dennis.co.uk (subject: Most Wanted)**

GALLEON FOR XBOX

We thought that Galleon had been forced to walk the plank, because we haven't heard anything on it for so long. Then out of the big blue comes news that SCi Entertainment will now be publishing the game, along with a cast-iron guarantee that it'll be released for Xbox in May.

DOOM & GLOOM

Cop a load of these nightmarishly good new shots of Doom III on PC

RELEASE DATES

CVG BRINGS YOU THE ULTIMATE CUT-OUT-AND-KEEP RELEASE SCHEDULE. MARK UP YOUR FAVES AND KEEP THIS LIST ON YOU AT ALL TIMES...

CUT OUT AND KEEP

JANUARY 2004

			I WANT IT
GBA	NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND	JANUARY 16	☐
PS2	BOMBASTIC	JANUARY 16	☐
PS2	MAFIA	JANUARY 16	☐
XB	MAFIA	JANUARY 16	☐
PS2	CONAN	JANUARY 16	☐
PS2	DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 XTREME LEGENDS	JANUARY 23	☐
PS2	.HACK	JANUARY 23	☐
GBA	TOP GUN COMBAT ZONE	JANUARY 23	☐
XB	MIDWAY TREASURES	JANUARY 23	☐
PS2	MIDWAY TREASURES	JANUARY 23	☐
XB	NHL RIVALS 2004	JANUARY 23	☐
PC	RAINBOW SIX 3: ATHENA SWORD	JANUARY 23	☐
PC	SIM CITY 4 DELUXE	JANUARY 30	☐
XB	MORROWIND: GAME OF THE YEAR	JANUARY 30	☐
PS2	ARC: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS	JANUARY 30	☐
PS2	LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION	JANUARY 30	☐
GBA	LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION	JANUARY 30	☐
PS2	NFL STREET	JANUARY 30	☐
XB	NFL STREET	JANUARY 30	☐
XB	DRAGON'S LAIR 3D	JANUARY 30	☐

FEBRUARY 2004

			I WANT IT
PC	PURPLE HAZE	FEBRUARY 1	☐
GC	CONAN	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	FALLOUT: BROTHERHOOD OF STEEL	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	SEGA GT ONLINE	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	SONIC HEROES	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	SONIC HEROES	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	FEBRUARY 6	☐
GB	URBAN FREESTYLE SOCCER	FEBRUARY 6	☐
GC	XGRA	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	MEGARACE 3	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	CARMEN SAN DIEGO	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	UNREAL II: THE AWAKENING	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	BALDURS GATE: DARK ALLIANCE II	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	R-TYPE FINAL	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	ROGUE OPS	FEBRUARY 6	☐
XB	ROGUE OPS	FEBRUARY 6	☐
GC	ROGUE OPS	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	CRICKET 2004	FEBRUARY 6	☐
GC	CONFLICT DESERT STORM II	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PC	X2: THE THREAT	FEBRUARY 6	☐
GC	THE POWERPUFF GIRLS: RELISH RAMPAGE	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PS2	GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM	FEBRUARY 6	☐
PC	UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2004	FEBRUARY 7	☐
PC	CHICAGO 1930	FEBRUARY 7	☐
XB	BLOWOUT	FEBRUARY 13	☐
PS2	MX UNLEASHED	FEBRUARY 13	☐
PS2	I-NINJA	FEBRUARY 13	☐
PS2	MAXIMO VS THE ARMY OF ZIN	FEBRUARY 13	☐
PS2	SPY HUNTER 2	FEBRUARY 13	☐
XB	SPY HUNTER 2	FEBRUARY 13	☐
GC	SPY HUNTER 2	FEBRUARY 13	☐
GC	NFL STREET	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GC	GOTCHA FORCE	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	DRAKE OF THE 99 DRAGONS	FEBRUARY 20	☐
PS2	KILL.SWITCH	FEBRUARY 20	☐
PS2	SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GC	SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	FEBRUARY 20	☐
PS2	WHIPLASH	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	WHIPLASH	FEBRUARY 20	☐

Despite dubious clothing and a less linear plot, this looks set to remain classic Final Fantasy stuff

Keeps it raw, keeps it real, keeps it rough as ghetto pavement. It's stripped down, solid gameplay muscle

HOT PICKS

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE SIZZLING NEWCOMERS IN YOUR LOCAL GAMES SHACK

Rogue Ops is dead easy to get into, but is equal parts satisfying and fun to being derivative and tired

One of Capcom's most stylish efforts, and surprisingly enjoyable. Shame it's so childish and only on GameCube

Twin Snakes fails to throw anything new into the stealth pot, but rarely has a trip down memory lane been this fun

PC	NEIGHBOURS FROM HELL 2	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	WRATH	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GBA	BARBARIAN	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GC	BARBARIAN	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GC	HARVEST MOON: IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	FEBRUARY 20	☐
PS2	JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GC	JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	FEBRUARY 20	☐
GBA	HARVEST MOON FRIENDS OF MINERAL TOWN	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	PITFALL HARRY	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	PUYO POP	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	ARMED AND DANGEROUS	FEBRUARY 20	☐
PS2	FINAL FANTASY X-2	FEBRUARY 20	☐
XB	STEEL BATTALION: LINE OF CONTACT	FEBRUARY 27	☐
PS2	HEADHUNTER 2	FEBRUARY 27	☐
XB	HEADHUNTER 2	FEBRUARY 27	☐
PS2	KYA: DARK LINEAGE	FEBRUARY 27	☐
XB	RUN LIKE HELL	FEBRUARY 27	☐
PC	SOLDNER SECRET OF WARS	FEBRUARY 27	☐
PS2	CY GIRLS	FEBRUARY	☐
PC	ROBIN HOOD DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	FEBRUARY	☐
PC	SONIC DX	FEBRUARY	☐
PS2	OUTLAW VOLLEYBALL	FEBRUARY	☐

MARCH 2004

			I WANT IT
PC	SAVAGE	MARCH 1	☐
PC	RIFT RUNNER	MARCH 1	☐
PC	ITCH	MARCH 5	☐
PS2	MEGAMAN X7	MARCH 5	☐
PC	AGAINST ROME	MARCH 5	☐
GC	ROBOCOP	MARCH 5	☐
GBA	ROBOCOP	MARCH 5	☐
PS2	TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU	MARCH 12	☐
GBA	TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU	MARCH 12	☐
GC	TAK AND THE POWER OF JUJU	MARCH 12	☐
GBA	DISNEY'S ALADDIN	MARCH 12	☐
XB	TENCHU: RETURN FROM DARKNESS	MARCH 19	☐
PS2	SCOOBY DOO! MYSTERY MAYHEM	MARCH 19	☐
XB	DR SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT	MARCH 19	☐
GBA	DR SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT	MARCH 19	☐
XB	MXT: MOTOTRAX FEATURING TRAVIS PASTRANA	MARCH 19	☐
PC	MEDAL OF HONOR: PACIFIC ASSAULT	MARCH 19	☐
PC	THE SIMS 2	MARCH 19	☐
PC	PRO RUGBY MANAGER	MARCH 25	☐
PC	BATTLEFIELD VIETNAM	MARCH 26	☐
XB	DEADMAN'S HAND	MARCH 26	☐
PS2	IRON STORM	MARCH 26	☐
XB	CURSE: THE EYE OF ISIS	MARCH 26	☐
XB	AUTO MODELLISTA	MARCH	☐
GC	METAL GEAR SOLID: TWIN SNAKES	MARCH	☐
PS2	SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS	MARCH	☐
XB	SILENT SCOPE COMPLETE	MARCH	☐
PS2	SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN	MARCH	☐
PS2	FORBIDDEN SIREN	MARCH	☐
PS2	RISE TO HONOR	MARCH	☐
PS2	THE SUFFERING	MARCH	☐
PS2	MUMMY	MARCH	☐
PS2	RETRO STRIKE	MARCH	☐
XB	RETRO STRIKE	MARCH	☐
PS2	THIS IS FOOTBALL 2004	MARCH	☐
PC	JOINT OPERATIONS	MARCH	☐
XB	SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	MARCH	☐
PS2	SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	MARCH	☐
GC	SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	MARCH	☐
PC	SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	MARCH	☐

APRIL 2004

			I WANT IT
XB	FAST AND FURIOUS	APRIL 1	☐
XB	AQUANOX	APRIL 1	☐
PS2	RICHARD BURNS RALLY	APRIL 6	☐
XB	THE SUFFERING	APRIL 9	☐
XB	RICHARD BURNS RALLY	APRIL 9	☐
PC	TRANSPORT GIANT	APRIL 23	☐
XB	WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY	APRIL	☐
XB	SHOWDOWN: LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	APRIL	☐
PS2	MCFARLANE'S EVIL PROPHECY	APRIL	☐

RELEASE DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Bugger off, I'm knackered. It's hard work pulling a sickie for all of December

MAILBAG

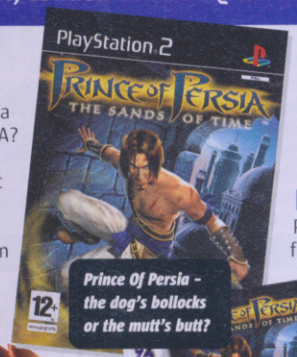
Send your rantings and ravings (or a letter) to: Mailbag, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 9 Dallington Street, London EV1V 0BQ. Or email us at mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

MEAN TO JEAN

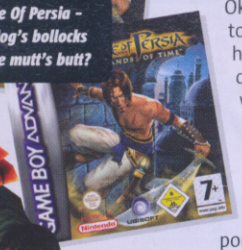
Is there or will there be a Worms game on the GBA? Also, I've heard that in Onimusha 3 you can get the almost-as-cool-as-you-lot Jean Reno who starred in Leon. But from what I've seen, all he does is go round on his bike whipping people with an over-sized white thing. It's an offence to the Jean we know, the one who dangled upside down from drainpipes with pistols in hand, the one who (**Yeah, yeah, we get the point**)

Jake, via email

CVG *After last year's iffy Worms Blast effort, we're not surprised nothing new has been announced for GBA just yet. If you're simply desperate to shake your handheld worm, then check out Vodafone's big-selling new mobile version. As for Jean, he's so hard he can take more leathering than one of Jordan's G-strings.*



Prince Of Persia – the dog's bollocks or the mutt's butt?



MUTT'S NUTS

Prince Of Persia is a frickin' great game. Okay, it only took me nine hours to complete but it was a great ride. Nifty graphics and acrobatics. Voice talent was a bit pony but overall it gets the official Dog's Bollocks rating.

Matty, via email

MUTT'S BUTT

Prince Of Persia looks good, plays great and allows fans to relive their childhood moments of playing the original. Now, you can also buy it on the GBA, which I was very happy about. But, it doesn't have the same type of atmosphere as the others, which I was very disappointed about. Don't get me wrong, I love it on GBA, but why do the GBA owners get shafted? I know it's all about the graphics and the power of the system, but why don't Nintendo spend more time getting the GBA version as good as the others? Overall, it's a good game, but I wish it was more like the PS2 version.

Deathblade, via email

Jean should've signed to Nintendo instead. They treat their stars with dignity and respect

GUEST LETTER

More strange letters from a parallel universe

STREAM OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS

Great magazine by the way it must be stressful how do you handle the stress of finding all game related info then turning that info that is eye candy in your magazine that sort of thing no group of people can do with out being stressed and bite off colleagues' head for no reason at all how do you do it?

Kevin, Co. Durham

CVG *This is a Beckett or Joycean literary-snorefest stream of consciousness thing, right? Biting people's heads off should be saved for when you're really hungry though, Mr Asylum Patient.*

Alex, driven wild by stress and with head bitten off

Anyway you dress is up, a turd is still a turd. Just ask anyone who's seen Revolutions

CVG STINKER

MATRIX RECODED

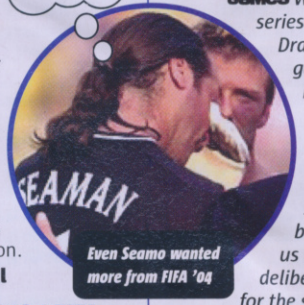
Ever since I saw people writing in their game ideas I've been trying to think of my own. All I could think of was crap re-makes, but then I thought of a game that needed improvement: THE MATRIX!!! An FPS Matrix game. All the characters (well all, the cool ones) from Morpheus to Ghost and all the weapons and levels like the lobby and where Neo and Smith fight. And power-ups like Bullet Time and Bullet Dodge and maybe Bullet Stop.

Kieran, Co Clare

P.S. Do you come to Ireland for competitions?

Hmm, it's more like half an idea, with most of the features borrowed from Max Payne, which kind of borrowed them from... The Matrix. You could call it Matrix Recycled. Keep them coming peeps. Only no more half-baked rubbish ones please.

P.S. Of course Challenge CVG can go to Ireland. Just not to certain parts of Co Clare.



Even Seamo wanted more from FIFA '04

ANOTHER KICKING '04 FIFA

My favourite game series used to be FIFA, and I still have a tear in my eye remembering the first time I played '99 on PlayStation. FIFA was still the king of football games until 2001. The birth of Pro Evo made a fool out of second-rate FIFA. I was so upset. My wounds have got even deeper since. There was a glimmer of hope – just maybe FIFA '04 could regain its title as the greatest football game. But my heart was broken once again.

Ross, Surrey

Broken-hearted over Broken Sword? So were we

ALL BROKEN UP

I can't believe you only gave Broken Sword 6/10 and said it's only worth playing through if you're wanting something different. How dare you! It's a brilliant game and every other magazine has been clever enough to know that, so why not yours? You also say it's too slow – what are you talking about? In fact, I think one of the things that makes this game not quite as good as the first one is the fact that it is a little too fast in progression. I suppose it could have been worse, you could have given Mario Kart: Double Dash!! a bad score as well...

Michael, via email

CVG *We're fans of the series but feel Sleeping Dragon's evolved gameplay is a bit of a halfway house that has lost something of the magic of earlier installments. We're not afraid to stand up for what we believe, even if it sets us apart, nor are we deliberately controversial for the sake of looking clever. We believe our score reflects how most of CVG's readers would feel if they paid full price for this title. Wanna be a sheep? Go bleat in the other mags.*

JOE'S WELL HARDIFUL

I've just completed Viewtiful Joe on Adult mode and can honestly say that

it is the hardest game of the past five years, but still manages to keep hold of you until the end. I was surprised to find that it took me longer to complete the seven levels of the game than it took me to finish other Capcom classics Resident Evil 1 and 0. We need more old skool style games like this. P.S. Wouldn't VJoe be a mint character for Marvel Vs Capcom 3?

Hosea, via email

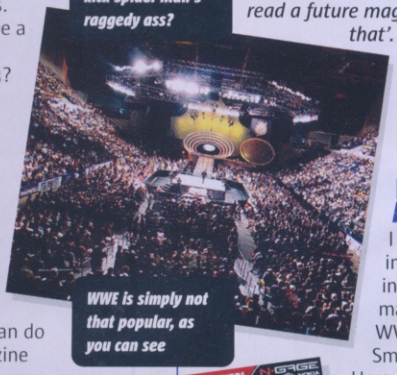
Could Viewtiful Joe kick Spider-Man's raggedy ass?

HEAR HEAR

Just finished the survey in Issue 267 and it made me realise how great a magazine you are. You, unlike other magazines, want to know what you can do to make your magazine better. Anyway, enough praise and on to the questions: will a reader issue be coming up soon and will you be changing the magazine as a result to the survey?

Oisín, Ireland.

CVG *Our 20th Birthday Readers' issue was a mega success, so damn straight we're thinking about doing another reader issue when the time is right. And yup, we're always looking to improve the mag, so all your hard work will be jacked directly into Alex's head. If he survives the information overload, you'll be able to read a future mag and say 'I did that'. Before a man in a white coat locks you up for talking to yourself.*



WWE is simply not that popular, as you can see

BUMP AND GRIND

I was very interested in the promises made about WWE SmackDown! Here Comes The Pain, such as better commentary and superstar voices. I slotted the game into my machine and, to my surprise, no commentary, no voices and a strange grinding noise. Although I read many reviews, none mentioned any of these failures, and I wanted your opinion on the matter.

Mr K, Dorset

CVG *THQ tells us the commentary and voices you're talking about were due to be included, but unfortunately at the very last minute got bumped off as the superstars' schedules were too busy to do the recordings in time for the game's release. You can bet it'll be in there in full next year. The grinding noise sounds well weird though – we've not heard of any problems with the discs, so it could be that your PS2 laser's dead.*

Look out for another readers' issue soon

BARGAIN BASEMENT BOX

Know a good deal when you see one? Prove it...

GAME offered the Mario Kart Pak (with four Zelda games) and two (average) Star Wars games for £99.99 – it was the best offer this Xmas. I already have an import Cube but I couldn't refuse. But in all the shops I've been in, all I hear is people asking the assistant, "What PS2 offers have you got on?" What's happened to people? Xbox is the most powerful machine and Cube is home to some excellent games. PS2 owners should wake up and smell the roses. Sony's been slowly edging the price down at the last minute, trying to get as much as they can out of us, rip-off Britain. Over-priced and overrated . And yes, I have a PS2 – I won it from this excellent mag.

Mark, Rotherham

Seems the spirit of Console-Nation corner lives on. Perhaps we should resurrect it...

Tony Hawk's Underground on PC? One day, maybe

NOT HAWKED ON PC

I was just wondering whether Tony Hawk's Underground is scheduled for the PC, and when?

Phil, via email

CVG *Officially? That's a no. But we wouldn't be surprised if a PC version is unveiled at E3 next year.*

SNAKE HAYTER

Best wishes to y'all at this festive season. I was gonna buy you guys a present for doing such a good job, but I actually spent the money on the new X-men 2 DVD. I watched it the other day and came across something interesting. The screenplay was written by a chappy called David Hayter. This meant nothing to me, though it rang a bell the day after when I caught my little brother playing MGS on MY computer. I was about to quit the game, the opening sequence of MGS came around and who should be voicing Solid Snake but David Hayter. Is David Hayter, screenwriter, the same David Hayter, Solid Snake? People say Solid Snake is coming to the Silver Screen... I say he's already been there!

Dev, via email

CVG *Great spot Dev, the name is indeed the same. But quite why anyone would want to mince about writing scripts for Hollywood megabusters when he's got a perfectly good job voicing game characters is beyond us. So we say; they are different blokes.*

Q: Did Solid Snake also write the script for X-men 2? A: No

DUR-N'T TAKE THE PISS

Last month you said I was brainless. What a cheek, my maths is fine. Buy game, save £3 with coupon cut from magazine with interesting article on back, buy new CVG magazine for £2.85. Remainder = 15p. Cost of petrol going to shop to get new CVG magazine, 15p. Remainder = a big fat zero = I might has well have not bothered to use coupon. So, smarty pants, you tell me where did I save any money? In other words: My brain's just fine. I forgive you as it is nearly Christmas

Rose

CVG *We blame Santa. It was his sack that issue.*

STAR LETTER

SMOKIN', MR PRESIDENT

Bush got a coded message from Saddam. It read: 370HSSV-0773H Bush was stumped and sent for the CIA. The CIA was stumped too, so it went to the NSA. The NSA couldn't solve it either, so they asked Bill Clinton. He suggested turning the message upside down...

From Widow-Maker

CVG *There you have it peeps – proof that even former US Presidents read CVG, though after last year you should've let George keep that tag, Bill. Sorry, we're all out of cigars to reward you with for your efforts, but you can have a bundle of Joytech gear instead.*

JOYTECH

Each month's star letter-writer gets a bundle of quality peripherals from JOYTECH, so write your address clearly.

WINNER

CONSOLE-NATION CORNER

The Corner's where you go to indulge in some public console willy-waving or vent vile spewings about the systems you love to hate. We shelved it a while back 'cos you lot were all getting waaay too reasonable, but signs are you've been working up a head of bile...

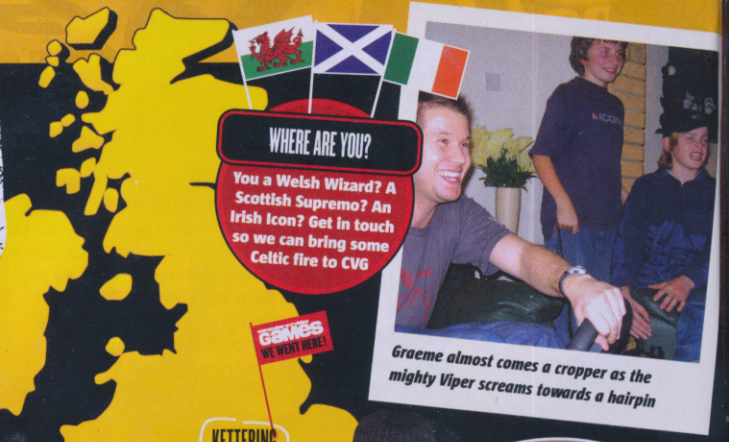
N-YER, N-YER, NER, NER, N-YER

I heard that Half-Life 2 will come out on the Xbox, but not the other consoles apart from GC2 and PS3. What a blatant ploy to make Microsoft look good. It'll make idiots think: "Oh, Xbox is as good as the next-gen consoles," which is obviously pants. PS3 won't be less powerful than the Xbox.

Matthius, via email

CVG *Yup, that sounds well prejudiced and half-arsed. Go Corner!*

CHALLENGE CVG ★on tour



Graeme almost comes a cropper as the mighty Viper screams towards a hairpin

TEAM CVG VS KETTERING RACERS

CVG PUTS PEDAL TO THE METAL AND TURBO BOOSTS UP TO KETTERING FOR THE ULTIMATE GT4 PROLOGUE BURNOUT!

Since GT4 prologue rolled up outside the office we haven't seen hide nor hair of Graeme. CVG's very own boy racer has been locked away putting in the track hours with Sony's amazing driving game.

To get rid of the grease-stained spanner monkey for a while, we got in touch with our mate Ricki Priestley. A legend on the mean streets of Kettering, Ricki heads up a shady team of turbo-charged dudes with four-star petrol for blood. Would Graeme be up to the test?

FIRST RUN: HARRY ARCHER

We figured we'd let the Kettering lads out onto the clean track to lay down some smoking lap times first, and then have our Graeme try and beat them. Everyone settled on driving the Chrysler Viper and running two laps of the Tsubuka circuit.

Harry slipped into the precision moulded bucket sofa and strapped himself in. "You can use my skidmarks as your racing lines," he sniped, but the skidmarks were in his pants as he spun off at the first corner. It was his first and only mistake and he screamed home in a respectable 2.57.369.

SECOND RUN: TOM JONES

Like his leathery Welsh namesake, Tom's a smooth operator and breezed through his laps without a hitch. But he crossed the line at 3.33.278. No spins, perfect racing line - why was the time so slow? "I kept my foot on the brake the whole way around".

THIRD RUN: STEPHEN NOLAN

With a feet of lead, Stephen is the Kettering posse's speed freak. But arse-melting speeds and 180 degree hairpin bends don't combine very well. Taking bends at 150mph, Stephen battered the Viper's bodywork until it looked more like a Mini Metro, clocking a snail-like 3.38.882.

FOURTH RUN: RICKI PRIESTLEY

Like Vin Diesel in The Fast And The Furious, Ricki lives his life a quarter mile at a time. Which is fine when you're driving to the corner shop and back, but not much use when you're trying to set a record. Still, Ricki's hyperactive handling and sublime balance of accelerator and brake pedal enabled him to put in one of the better performances – 3.03.502.

Ricki took the whole thing a bit too seriously – he didn't really need that crash helmet

Harry adopts the favourite driving position of the boy racer – the arm slouch

There's nothing like the sting of defeat to elicit some hardcore road rage

Kettering – the boy racer capital of the Midlands, and next town on CVG's hit list

"Stay on the tarmac Stephen!" we screamed. "I'm off-roading!"

FINAL RUN: TEAM CVG

"I could beat these times in my ma's Micra!" cackled Graeme, revving his engine like those nobs at the burger drive-through. With one hand on the wheel Graeme screamed round the track in a tarmac-melting 2.15.472. "That's a full 42 seconds ahead of you losers. I could've slapped on some blingin' 22-inch spinner alloys and fitted a trick new bodykit on the CVG motor in that time." Yup, he's a tit, but Graeme's clocked up another decisive victory for Team CVG.

Graeme enjoys his moment of glory while the others ignore him completely

TEAM CVG TAKES THE CHEQUERED FLAG

Christ! Not only do we have to put up with the constant drone of 5.0 litre engines and the smell of sump oil emanating from the games room, now Graeme won't stop telling us how he creamed Ricki and the lads at the Kettering cruise.

But we can't help but be proud of the way he left the plucky upstarts spluttering on his exhaust fumes. Now, if we could only stop him from coming to work wearing a crash helmet – or is that just his hairdo?

WIN AMAZING XBOX GEAR!

We've teamed up with our mates at Microsoft to create the ultimate Challenge CVG. From next month we'll be taking you on at some of Xbox Live!'s best multiplayer games.

You don't have to have an Xbox or Xbox Live! to enter cos we'll ship you to CVG's nuclear-proof games' bunker to get hooked up. So get that coupon sent in, show us your skills, and soon you could be wallowing in online gaming glory!

XBOX LIVE

DON'T SING IT, BRING IT

CHALLENGE CVG ★on tour

With the help of Microsoft Challenge CVG's about to go online – don't miss out!

Remember, you don't need an Xbox or Live to be in with a chance of winning some sweet Xbox gear, so go on, get it sorted out! All you need to do is fill out the form below and bash it off to us here at CVG central. Get moving.

★HELLO, MY NAME IS: .....

★BUT YOU MUST CALL ME ..... [nickname] ★AND I'M..... [age]

★I AM THE BEST AT: ..... [game name]

★MY ADDRESS IS: .....

★DAYTIME TELEPHONE NO: ..... ★EVENING TELEPHONE NO:.....

★EMAIL: .....

Send to: CVG Reader Challenge, CVG magazine, Dennis Publishing, 9 Dallington Street. London, EC1v 0BQ

Use the destructive powers of both vampire Kain and his archrival, the soul-devouring Raziel, to take the lives of your enemies in brutal and bloody style. This is a dark and action packed odyssey, from which only one of these anti heroes will survive.

PlayStation.2 XBOX PC CD-ROM eidos

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PUBLISHER
ATARI
DEVELOPER
MELBOURNE HOUSE
OUT: FEB/MARCH

IN A NUTSHELL

The hit cartoon and toys are coming to PS2 in a third-person shooter. Battle the evil Decepticon forces across eight massive levels, changing the abilities of your Autobot with impressive results.

AVAILABLE ON

PS2

WWW.ATARI.COM

UPDATE!

TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

PRELUDE TO ENERGON

THE ROBOTS IN DISGUISE ARE UNMASKED AS CVG GETS THE SCOOP ON PS2'S EXPLOSIVE NEW BLASTER

Hands up if you haven't heard of Transformers? No one? Thought not. Back in the Eighties the robots in disguise were considered just another short-lived fad, like He-Man or Tamagotchi.

But here we are in 2004 and the bots are bigger than ever, with new shows, new toys and of course a new game!

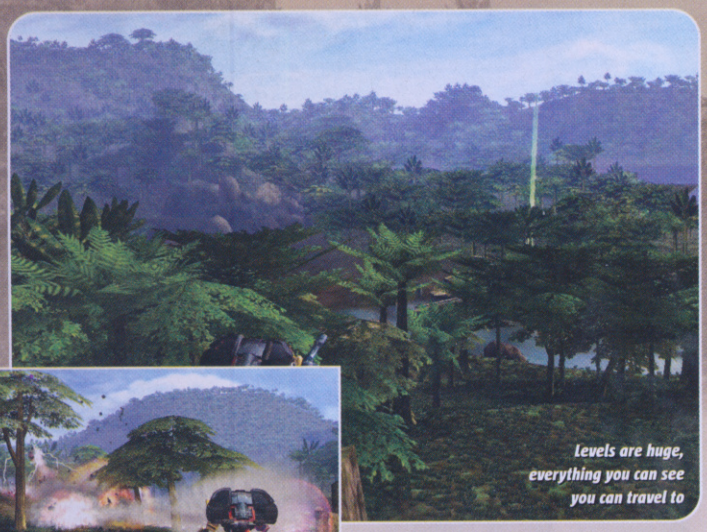
Transformers Armada: Prelude To Energon places you in control of the Autobots in their continuing battle against the evil Decepticons. The action takes place on Earth in the near future of 2010. A long-lost Transformers ship crashed on our planet long before the dawn of mankind. On board the ship are 40 Mini-cons, hi-tech devices that can radically enhance a Transformer's abilities. Now scattered across the globe, the Autobots and Decepticons arrive on our planet to search for the Mini-cons and to use their abilities against their fierce rivals.

OP gets caught in an explosion

IN THE JUNGLE

You start at Autobot Headquarters, and your first task is to choose an Autobot to tackle a level. There are three to choose from,

Decepticlones come out to play! I want you to meet my new atomiser



Levels are huge, everything you can see you can travel to

With enough firepower it's possible to cause damage to the environments

Get close enough to an opponent and you can give 'em a good metal fisting

CUE THE DEEP VOICED TRAILER DUDE

The metal-wrecking action of Transformers Armada: Prelude To Energon takes place here on Earth in 2010.

The war for supremacy between the Autobots and Decepticons continues. On earth, a group of children have discovered a Transformer ship that crash-landed on the planet long before the dawn of mankind.

Accidentally, the kids activate the ship's cargo of Mini-cons. Little do they know that the Autobots and Decepticons hoped this cargo would never be discovered. Mini-cons were used by the Transformers in the Great War. When the ferocity of the war grew out of control, both the Autobots and Decepticons called a truce and the decision was made to rid the war of the dangerous Mini-cons. They were placed in a ship and sent into space, never to be seen again – until now!

1 Optimus Prime takes flight with the Slipstream Mini-con

2 Our pal Optimus investigates a crashed aircraft

The battle begins in the Amazon jungle, one of eight levels you'll need to explore if you want to retrieve the 40 hidden Mini-cons. Despite the joy of controlling a walking, blasting Autobot, the first thing that strikes you when playing is the game's visual quality. It looks amazing. With massive, detailed levels, Transformers Armada really is pushing the PS2 to its limits. Although primarily it's a blaster, there's a lot more to the action than just shooting.

Optimus Prime poses for the cameras

The hills are alive with the fire of Decepticlones

ENTER THE DECEPTICONS

The dense jungle and hills of the Amazon roll off into the distance. You spot a waterfall high up in the mountains. After battling patrolling groups of enemies, you make your way up the mountain and reach the top of the waterfall. From here you

Optimus Prime, Hot Shot and Red Alert. Prime, the leader of the Autobots, is the biggest of the bunch with the ability to transform into a truck. Both Hot Shot and Red Alert can transform into sports cars. Each Autobot is rated on four attributes: Attack, Defence, Speed, and Power. Optimus is heavier and slower than his allies, but packs more firepower. Choosing the right Autobot for each level isn't vital but can prove worthwhile.

Just wait until you see this waterfall and river in motion – incredible!

Pink's not our favourite colour for a robot

The main advantage of Optimus's vehicle mode is he can run the enemy over

IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC

Watching your Autobot transform from bot to vehicle is an impressive sight made even more enjoyable with the accompaniment of that famous sound effect.

What's technically remarkable about these transformations is that the designers of the game seem to have a better grasp of animation the artists who work on the cartoon show!

1 Now it's a car

2 Now it's a robot

3 Now it's a car again!

SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE AUTOBOT

Hot Shot's sidekick Long Arm gets caught in the thick of the action

Aiding our three Autobot heroes are three mini sidekicks who accompany them throughout the action.

Jolt, Spark Plug and Long Arm can combine with the Autobots to boost their abilities in a similar way to the Mini-cons. These sidekicks can also transform and perform a Power Link – a Transformers version of The Matrix's Bullet Time – so they're handy to have around.

OP's about to stomp on his sidekick

The small character on the right is a sidekick. There's one for each Autobot

When robots eat beans – the first exclusive shots!

Here comes the cannon fodder

Even firing a laser in Transformers Armada looks beautiful

Do Autobot's feel the cold? He's probably got brass monkeys in the first place

Hot Shot glides above the Decepticlones

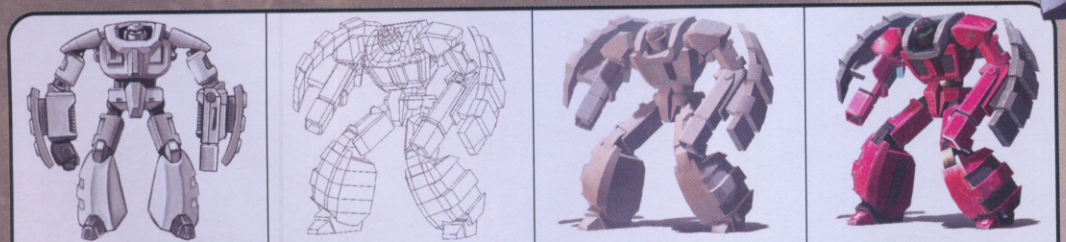
spy an old Aztec temple. Jumping across a broken bridge, you traverse the river and venture forward to the ruined temple. A deep canyon blocks your path, too steep to climb down, too wide to jump. You temporarily retreat and then hit the transform button, the famous sound effect makes itself heard, and where there was once a 12 metre tall robot, there's now a truck revving its engine and hurtling towards the canyon it's attempting to jump.

Each level is roughly eight square miles in size, packed full of enemies and boasting an impressively long draw distance. Later levels are full of variety, taking place in Antartica, the Atlantic Ocean, Alaska, Easter Island and of course, Cybertron. The cool thing about the level design is that despite having linear objectives you can ignore 'em and explore at leisure. It's possible to complete levels without tackling any, although you must defeat a boss to progress.

ATTACK OF THE CLONES

The bosses consist of some familiar characters if you're a fan of the series. Starscream, Tidal Wave, Megatron and Omicron are just some of the adversaries you'll face. Each boss has a weak point you'll want to focus your attacks on. Battling them can be a lengthy process. You're not confined to a small area but allowed to lure your enemy into any part of the larger level, using the scenery you've explored to your tactical advantage.

With the famous enemies only appearing in boss battles, you may be


This concept artwork shows how cool the digital models they've built are. But again, what's with the pink paint job, dudes?

We warned you, dumbass! Only a foolish Decepticlone stands in the way of OP's truck

DID YOU KNOW?

Transformers Armada: Prelude To Energon began life as an F1 racer. The game is built using the engine that powered GP Challenge by developers Melbourne House.

An aerial view of the lush Amazon level – everything you can see is accessible. Maybe not the river

Who would win – this lot or an army of Uruk-hai? As these guys are 5in tall and made of plastic, the Orcs.

Stop looking at us and fire at the enemy!

The Decepticlones march into battle

wondering who you're meant to fight during the rest of the action. The answer is Decepticlones – an infinite army of clones sent by the Decepticons to Earth, and infinite canon fodder for the Autobots. Before the legions of Transformers fanboys scream that there are no Decepticlones in the Transformers universe, allow us to explain further.

The Decepticlones have been invented for this game for one simple reason. A rule imposed on developers Melbourne House that states Transformers can't be killed. Whether they're Autobots or Decepticons, the main characters can only be damaged, but not completely destroyed. You can't really have a shooter where you can't destroy enemies, so be thankful for the Decepticlones. Despite some intelligent AI they exist only so you have something to smash to smithereens.

Optimus Prime starts his very own convoy

MINI-CON ADVENTURE

The Mini-cons that both forces are so desperate to control play a vital part in the way you tackle the game. Each of the 40 Mini-cons boasts a unique ability that you can kit out your Transformer with. They can boost your abilities with extra speed, bigger jumps or

The view of Prime's chrome-filled back end

WHAT NO MEGABOTS?

As much as we love Optimus Prime and battling the evil forces of the Decepticons, hands up who wants to see the Autobots combining their powers to tackle their bigger adversaries?

With enemies like Tidal Wave who stands over 300 feet tall, it's unfair that you have to battle him with just a single Autobot. That would never happen in the cartoon show, right?

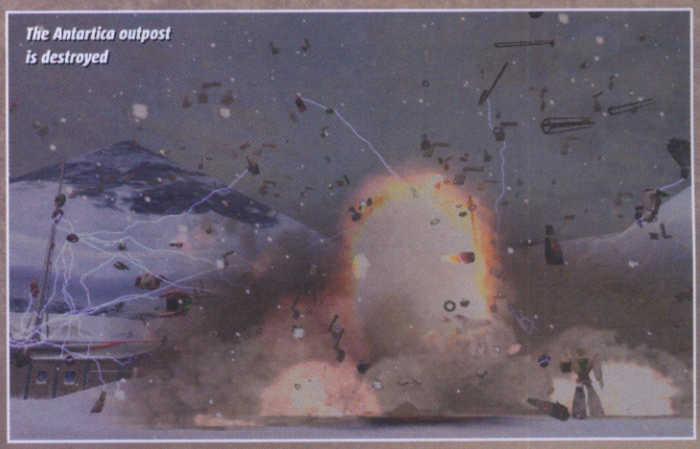
2 Tidal Wave emerges from the water

1 Waiting for Tidal Wave to appear

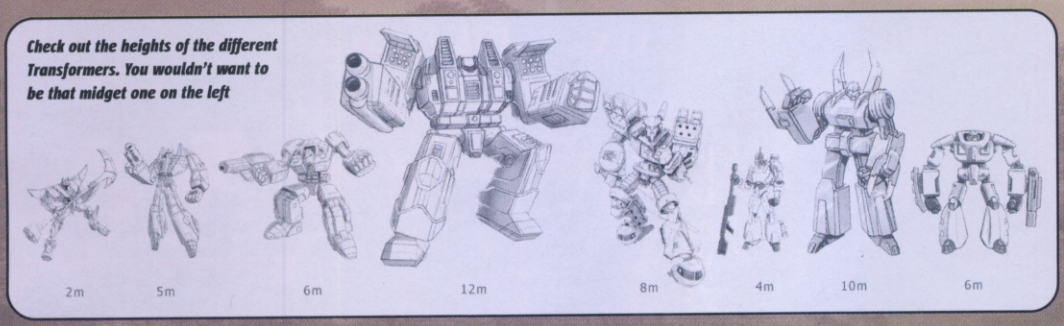
3 He's over 300 feet tall, so expect a real David and Goliath battle

Jungle detail of the Amazon level

The top of the waterfall looks a treat



The Antartica outpost is destroyed



Check out the heights of the different Transformers. You wouldn't want to be that midget one on the left

Robot and truck steal a rare moment together in a sunny glade

You won't believe how many upgrades you can attach to your Transformer

The enemies may be sitting ducks but they're pretty smart

The boss of Antartica is Starscream

Enemy drop-ships move into position. Better get ready for a firefight

Robots in disguise? That's the crappest tree disguise we've ever seen

A closer look at the Decepticlones

increased firepower. Or they can give you brand new abilities such as flight or invisibility. Each Autobot can carry up to four Mini-cons, so once you have collected more than four you'll have to think about what you take into the field.

Luckily, there are warp points in each level, allowing you to jump back to Autobot HQ and change Mini-cons if you need. You can also revisit older levels as you gain new skills such as the flight ability provided by the Mini-con Slipstream. The ability to fly through a level will allow you to reach previously inaccessible areas. Should you attempt this, a quick word of caution. The Decepticons, being worthy adversaries, constantly remain one-step ahead of your plans. They'll also revisit the older levels and populate them with tougher enemies.

Another problem you face is powering your Mini-cons. As each requires different levels of Energon consumption to power their circuitry you'll have to carefully balance what you carry with you. There's no point having massive weapons that drain all your Energon after a single shot when there are so many other Mini-cons you could be using. You can replenish Energon by collecting orbs from defeated enemies.

KI-KER-KER-KA-KAW

Of course, no Transformers game would be worth getting excited about without the ability to actually transform from bot to vehicle. Each of the Autobots can transform into a vehicle at any point in the game with a single button press.

It's often a good idea to transform, too. With such large levels you'll often want to speed through them and it's a lot quicker when

ANIME MAGIC

Transformers Armada boasts some impressive CG cutscenes that convey the story chugging along behind the scenes, as the action unfolds around you.

The cutscenes were produced by Japanese company BuildUp, who previously performed CG duties on Panzer Dragoon Orta and Soulcalibur II. Transformers marks the first time the company have contributed their skills to a project based outside of Japan.

The top-quality visuals include awesome sunsets

Star Scream can take to the air so is a tricky opponent. Bring him down with your finest firepower

DID YOU KNOW?

Transformers Armada is the second attempt by Melbourne House to create a Transformers game. Their first effort was scrapped after seven months in development and production switched to Prelude To Energon.

Hot Shot packs some kick-ass firepower

Some fancy attacks, but the enemy has avoided them

ADD IT UP

The 40 Mini-cons provide an impressive level of customisation to what your Autobot can do.

Don't believe us? Then here's a little maths for you. With three Autobots to choose from, plus three sidekicks and adding three difficulty levels, add 40 Mini-cons and four Mini-con slots on each Autobot – got all that? The result is 29,000 different combinations of Autobot. But is there one that can give a man pleasure?

If only there was a Mini-con that gave you skis

That heat-seeker looks like it's gonna hurt

you're in wheels rather than on foot. Plus, there are canyons and gorges that you can only cross in a vehicle.

If you get into a heavy firefight with Decepticlones you can also transform and leg it to a safe spot, or to somewhere better suited to making a stand. But the best reason to transform is a very simple one indeed. Every time you do it you hear one of the most famous cartoon sound effects of all time. As soon as you hear it in the game you'll have a massive grin slapped all over your face.

FORMING AN OPINION

So, having read about what's on offer, is it worth getting excited? The answer is definitely a big fat yes. From what we've played so far, Transformers Armada is shaping up to be a classy shooter that bears a lot of similarities with Halo, right down to the enemy drop ships – with the awesome added advantage of controlling a 12 metre tall robot that can transform into a bad-ass truck.

The most impressive aspect of Transformers Armada is that everyone can enjoy it, regardless of whether you're a fan of Transformers. Even if you're not familiar with Optimus Prime and Megatron there's something inherently cool about robots that can transform into vehicles – go on admit it!

CVG OPINION

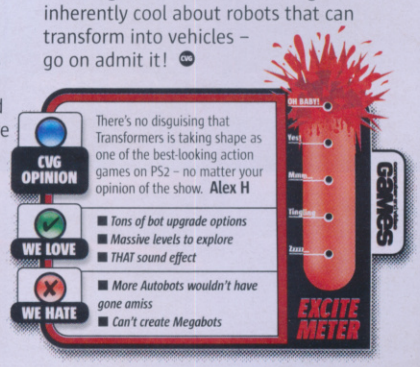
There's no disguising that Transformers is taking shape as one of the best-looking action games on PS2 – no matter your opinion of the show. **Alex H**

WE LOVE

- Tons of bot upgrade options
- Massive levels to explore
- THAT sound effect

WE HATE

- More Autobots wouldn't have gone amiss
- Can't create Megabots



INCOMING

ACCESS ALL AREAS TO THE FATTEST FORTHCOMING GAMES!

HOW CVG'S PREVIEWS WORK

- PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
- DEVELOPER: ACTIVISION
- OUT: DECEMBER 25
- ONLINE GAMING: x4

IN A NUTSHELL
Hotly anticipated, super-realistic, sneaky covert-ops sequel to last year's first-person shooter. The team-orientated multiplayer mode encompasses a wide variety of objective-based missions.

AVAILABLE ON: PS2

WWW.ACTIVISION.COM

ONLINE GAMING
Can you play the game online, against other gamers around the globe? Find out here

PUBLISHER, DEVELOPER AND RELEASE DATE
Who makes the game and when it's due out, to the best of CVG's knowledge

PLAYERS
How many people can play. If it's anything from one to 32, we'll put 32!

IN A NUTSHELL
A brief summary of what the game is like. If it's an update and CVG has already previewed it we'll also sum up stuff we've said before

FORMAT
The console we played the game on is highlighted red, but other formats it's coming out on are listed too!

WEBSITE
Want more info, more screens and to see it in action? Visit this URL!

THE BEST PICS
See exactly how good (or bad!) the game looks with CVG's sweet-as screenshots

INFO OVERLOAD!
What it's like to play, how it compares to other games and whether it's any good

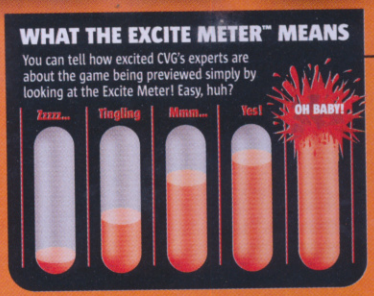
CVG OPINION
What we thought of the game, no matter what stage of development the game is at

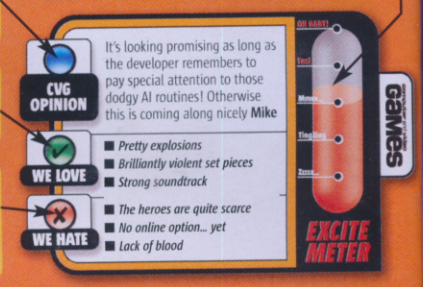
WE LOVE
The good things we like about the game so far

WE HATE
The things we'd really like the developers to avoid including in the final game

WHAT THE EXCITE METER™ MEANS

You can tell how excited CVG's experts are about the game being previewed simply by looking at the Excite Meter! Easy, huh?





GRAN TURISMO 4 PROLOGUE

DRIVEN FASTEST, DRIVEN FURTHEST, DRIVEN FIRST

- PUBLISHER: SONY
- DEVELOPER: POLYPHONY DIGITAL
- OUT: SUMMER 2004
- ONLINE GAMING: x6

IN A NUTSHELL
The real driving simulator just got, um, real-er. GT4 Prologue is a cut-down version of the final game with 61 cars and five tracks – the final version will have over 500 cars and over 100 tracks. Mental!

AVAILABLE ON: PS2

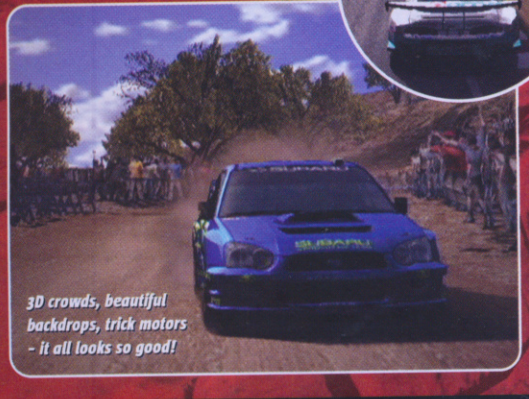
WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.UK

Like copping off with Rachel Stevens an hour after you got dumped by Cameron Diaz, there's good news and there's bad news.

Bad news first: GT4 Prologue, the hatchback-sized version of GT4 released in Japan at a budget price, isn't getting a UK release. If you want a copy you'll have to buy it on import.

Good news: we've driven

Nailing a rumble strip produces a lovely 'BRRRRRR' from the force feedback


3D crowds, beautiful backdrops, trick motors – it all looks so good!

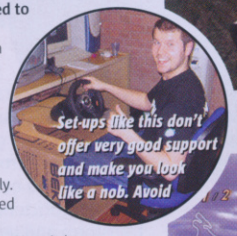
THE WHEEL DEAL

True GT maniacs know that the only way to get the real driving experience is to use Logitech's GT Force steering wheel. Why? As if GT3's handling wasn't accurate enough, the wheel actually reacted to the road surface.

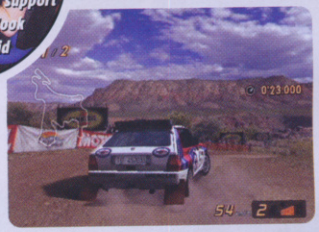
If you bumped over a rumble strip it would buck like a donkey with a pineapple up its arse, or if you applied too much throttle coming out of a corner it'd go limper than grandpa's willy.

The new and improved wheel is so mint it could freshen a zombie's breath. Now it has a full turning circle, a wee nubbin sequential gearshift for that total Fast And The Furious feel, and cool race-inspired styling.

Be warned, though – it's chunkier than a porn star's love muscle and needs a sturdy table for support. But playing GT4 with the GT Force is the closest you're gonna get to really driving these motors unless you pursue a career in grand theft auto.


Set-ups like this don't offer very good support and make you look like a nob. Avoid

Slide off-road and the wheel goes slack as you go into a spin


Rallying is the ultimate GT Force gas. Just holding on to the squirming wheel is tough!

CARMAGEDDON

Just try and picture it – over 500 cars to collect, tune up, and thrash to buggery on over 100 courses.

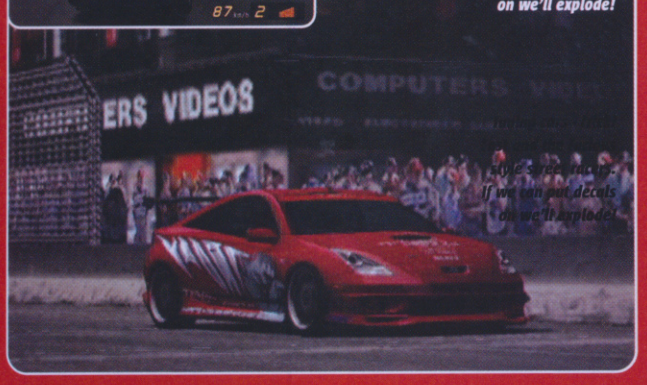
GT4 seems almost ridiculous in scale but we're not complaining. The full motor list is still a closely guarded secret, but we spotted some interesting-looking debutantes among Prologue's line-up.

Vintage cars - old, but still go like Hugh Hefner on Viagra

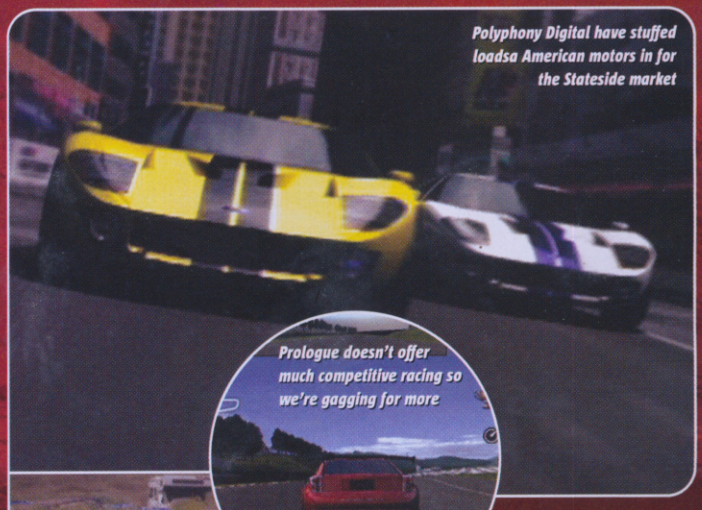
Rally cars - our old favourites make dedicated rally games look dumb, and GT4 will be no exception

MPVs - great for suburban families, pish for racing

Tuning cars - trick Fast And The Furious style street racers. If we can put decals on we'll explode!

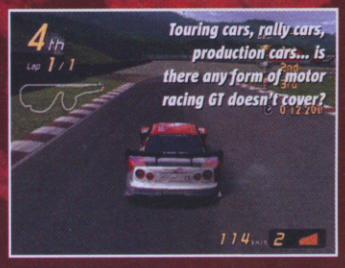


Polyphony Digital have stuffed loadsa American motors in for the Stateside market



Prologue doesn't offer much competitive racing so we're gagging for more

A curious-looking bobsleigh on wheels. Mad Prologue till the engine blew and we can tell you this – GT4 is going to freakin' rock!



Touring cars, rally cars, production cars... is there any form of motor racing GT doesn't cover?

POLE POSITION

Prologue may only have five of the 100-plus tracks in GT4, and only features 61 cars from a promised showroom of over 500. Plus, it only lets you drive time-trials and daft licence tests, and doesn't offer a peek at the online modes we've got such a massive boner about. But it does remind us why Gran Turismo is the ultimate driving experience.

Forget about the statistics for a minute and look at those screenshots! It's like developers Polyphony Digital have busted the PS2 wide open, yanked out all the graphics hardware and juiced out every last drip of sexiness. GT3 looked so good it still puts other racers to shame. GT4 really is even better.

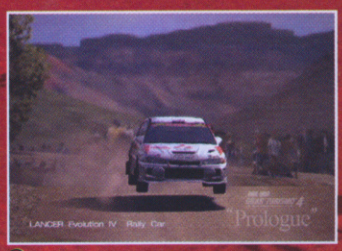
Electric cars - the Prius is enivronmentally friendly. Who gives a crap?

McLaren's monstrous F1 is available for test drives. Go easy on the throttle!

PROJECT GOTHAM WHO?

Every one of the five tracks in Prologue looks beautiful. Tsubuka Raceway and Fuji Speedway are dedicated race tracks so there's not much background detail, but the Grand Canyon rally stage, New York and Italy's Citte di Aria all look wicked. Take a look at New York's Times Square or the amazing view across the fields of Tuscany and ask yourself – what was the big deal about Project Gotham 2 again?

On top of that, added visual elements help to make the racing more interesting, especially on the Grand Canyon rally level. As you slip 'n' slide around, 3D crowds wave and cheer. Some really brave nutters even snap photos from the middle of the



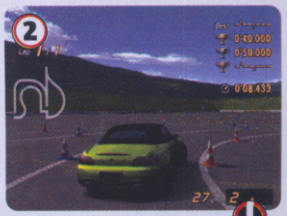
The only thing better than a Mitsu Evo is a Mitsu Evo flying through the air!

DRIVING SCHOOL

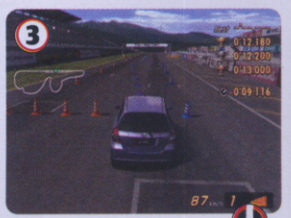
The main component of Prologue are the licence tests.

You'll have to perform all kinds of automotive acrobatics like weaving between cones, overtaking opponents without denting your bodywork, and, er, driving really fast in a straight line.

Complete a test and you're awarded a motor, like this sweet CLK



Cone challenges are a test of your throttle and handling skills

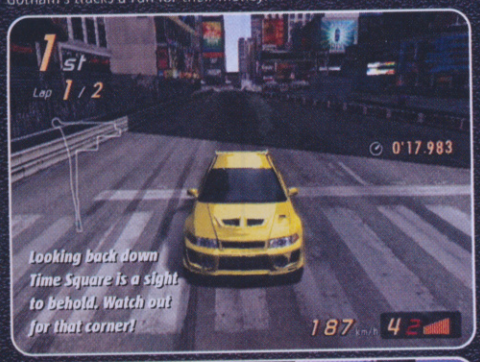


Tests range from quick 15 second blasts to ten lap marathons

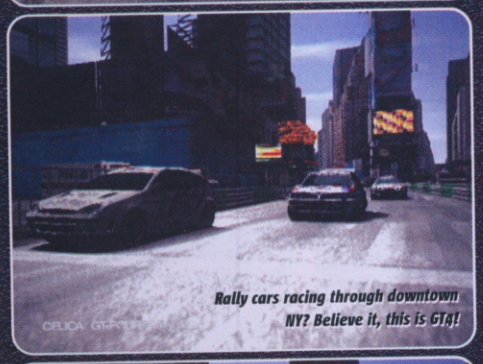
NEW YORK

Remember the awesome Seattle circuit from GT3, with its meandering boulevards and spinal cord-dislocating hair-pins?

This is even better. Thundering through a perfect, neon-sparkling Time Square at 180mph is one of the sweetest sensations we've ever felt from a racing game. Gives Project Gotham's tracks a run for their money.



Looking back down Time Square is a sight to behold. Watch out for that corner!



Rally cars racing through downtown NY? Believe it, this is GT4!

Every neon sign, videowall, billboard, and grot mag shop is in the right place

It's the perfect place to unleash your favourite supercharged American beast

So is the AI any better? To be honest it doesn't look like it, but there's still time

road, leaping from your path as you spray grit up their arses. It makes tracks in other racing games look more deserted than a Michael Jackson concert at a nursery school.

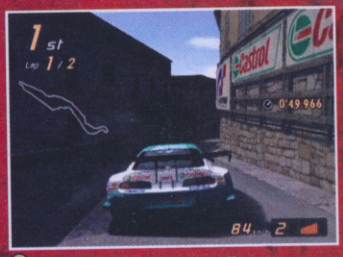
CAR IN THE COMMUNITY

But what about the cars? Well, you know how mint that Subaru Impreza looks as it growls down the high street? It looks even better wearing GT4's gleaming, polygon bodykit. From the crappest little dingers, to roaring beasts like the McLaren F1, they all look tastier than Jennifer Ellison swimming topless in a pool full of lager. More importantly, they actually look like they're riding the road surface. Hit a bump and the suspension will soak it up sending sparks everywhere, slam on the brakes and the nose will graze the tarmac. It's perfect.

THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

And it's possible because the guys who make GT care so much about cars that they drink petrol with their

Low-riding supercars weren't designed for kerbs, hence the shower of sparks



Cittie Di Aria's streets are well narrow

Those sweet Japanese rice rockets are back

TSUKUBA RACEWAY

GT4 Prologue's first track is a simple little Japanese raceway that hones your technical skills with sharp turns connected by diddy wee straights.

A bit like Wee Man off Jackass – short and not much to look at, but still entertaining. Ideal for putting your favourite hot hatch through its paces, or getting a feel for the new handling system.

Tsukuba looks boring, but who cares when you're racing

The tight hairpins are fine for understeering Evos

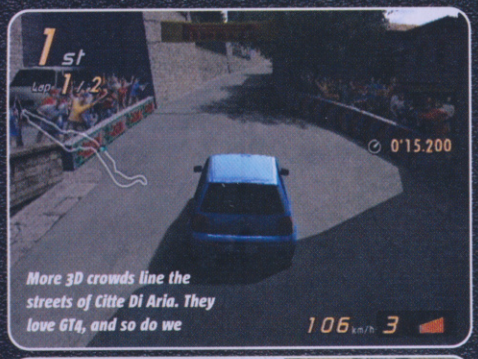
The short straights and tight turns – low-end output territory

It's really more suited for doddery wee granny motors

CITTE DI ARIA

There's something so completely different about this winding track through an Italian mountain village that racing it feels completely fresh.

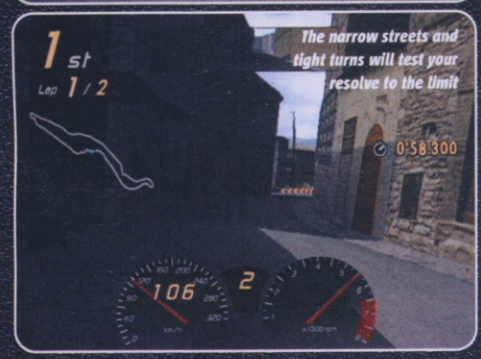
Which is more than can be said for your pants after one lap – the combination of nose-bleed altitudes, tight turns and narrow streets will have your nipsy spitting brown nuggets.



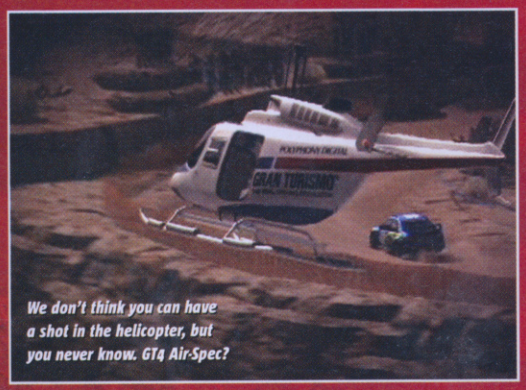
More 3D crowds line the streets of Citte Di Aria. They love GT4, and so do we

We love the long downhill descent

Check out how beautiful that background is! We've never seen anything like it!



The narrow streets and tight turns will test your resolve to the limit



We don't think you can have a shot in the helicopter, but you never know. GT4 Air-Spec?

GRAND CANYON

If you could build a rally track anywhere in the world, where would it be? Duh, round the edge of the Grand Canyon!

What could possibly be daft about unleashing slippery off-roaders along the edge of the world's biggest hole? Slip off course and you and your car become one as a pancake half a mile below. We reckon this could be the finest set-piece ever in a racing game.

There are more bumps in the road, so watch your shocks!

No, you can't do a Thelma and Louise over the edge

The locations are mapped for 40 miles in every direction

Crazy photographers give you something to aim at

morning coffee. So much work has gone into researching, tracking down and recreating all of GT4's cars that our lazy-arsed brains can't even comprehend it. But it shows.

Oh yes, it shows. Each car handles realistically, accurately, and distinctly. Use the new Logitech wheel and you'll swear you were driving the real thing. It's sheer driving bliss.

SEX ON WHEELS

Bizarrely, this awesome realism could be the only black mark on GT4's MOT. It's going to be so in-depth it's in danger of disappearing up it's own carbon-fibre tailpipe, and if you couldn't give a monkey's nutsack about cars then GT4 will be more intimidating than an angry James Earl Cash asking for a lend of a tenner.

But if you know your Fiats from your Ferraris the whole experience will be more exciting and satisfying than an evening with Britney Spears in the back seat of a Bentley.

See, Gran Turismo 4 is going to be more than just a game; it's about loving the automobile. After razzing Prologue until the wheels came off we can't wait to get GT4 on the road, open her up, and fill her full of our five-star love fuel.

FUJI SPEEDWAY

Like Tsubuka, Fuji Speedway is another out-and-out race track.

The emphasis here is on long, gas-guzzling straights, interrupted only by corners so high-speed the G-forces will turn your face inside out. Top of the range production cars and ultra powerful GT motors rule this tarmac.

The endless back straight is the perfect stretch to make up those places

You can open up really meaty motors like this NISM Skyline at Fuji

It's not all just pedal to the metal – there's some complex technical stuff

Like Tsubuka, it all looks a bit dull

CVG OPINION

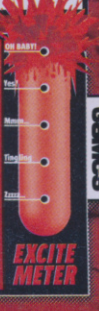
We'll have to wait until summer, but on the evidence of Prologue, GT4 is on the road to truly being the ultimate driving game. **Graeme.**

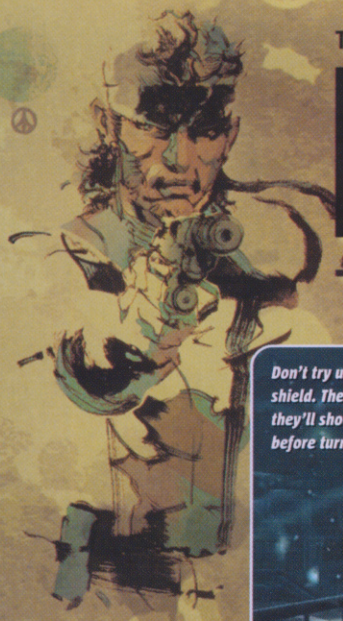
WE LOVE

- *Shockingly good visuals*
- *Intense realism*
- *It's the ultimate driving game*

WE HATE

- *Intimidating for newcomers*
- *Online delays – will it work?*
- *Having to wait until Summer*

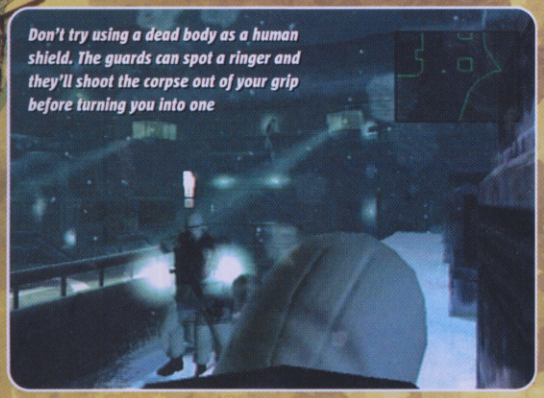




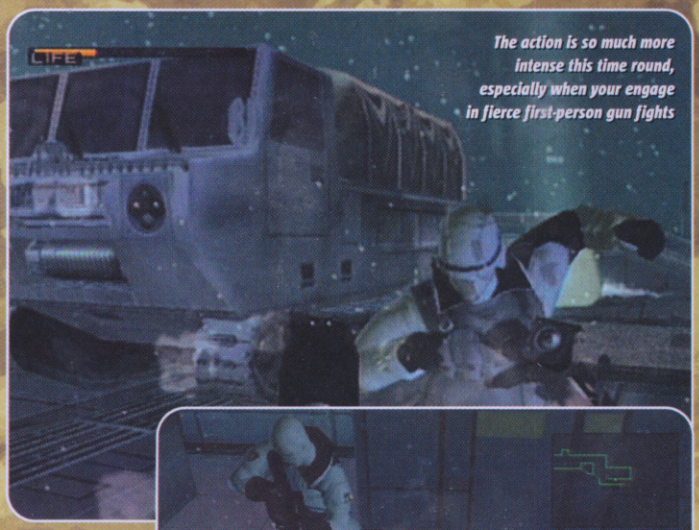
TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

METAL GEAR SOLID®

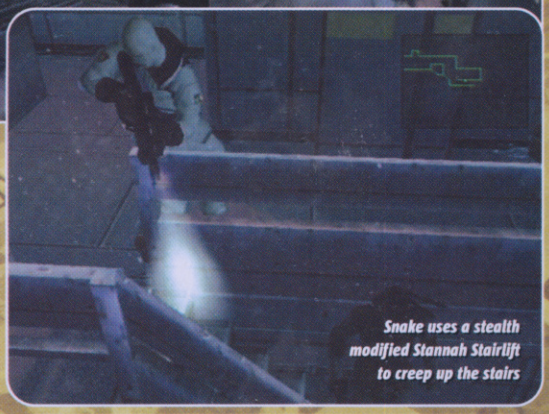
THE TWIN SNAKES



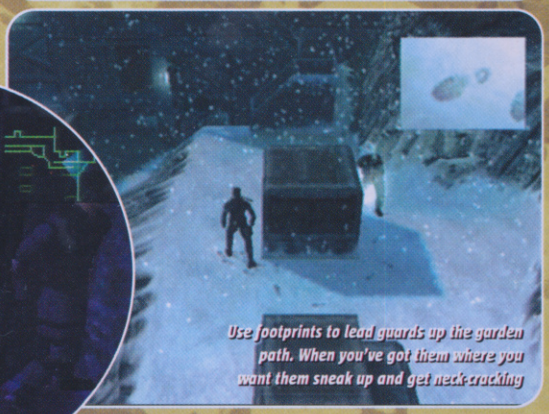
Don't try using a dead body as a human shield. The guards can spot a ringer and they'll shoot the corpse out of your grip before turning you into one



The action is so much more intense this time round, especially when your engage in fierce first-person gun fights

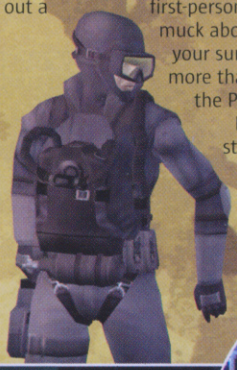


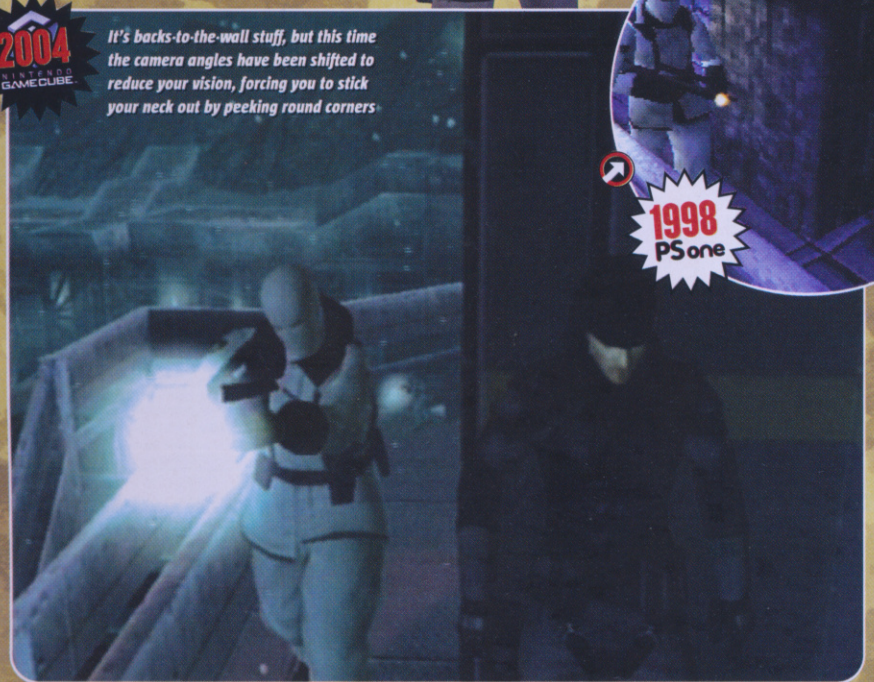
Snake uses a stealth modified Stannah Stairlift to creep up the stairs



Use footprints to lead guards up the garden path. When you've got them where you want them sneak up and get neck-cracking

Snake's hand-to-hand combat abilities are identical to his skills in Sons Of Liberty, which see him finish attack combos with a flying spin kick





It's backs-to-the-wall stuff, but this time the camera angles have been shifted to reduce your vision, forcing you to stick your neck out by peeking round corners

PUBLISHER
KONAMI
DEVELOPER
SILICON KNIGHTS
OUT MARCH

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

The hardcore consider Snake's 1998 appearance on PSone as the best of his games (remember he also popped up on NES in 1987). Now Kojima's epic has been reworked and updated exclusively for GameCube.

AVAILABLE ON
NINTENDO GAMECUBE.

www.konamijpn.com/products/mgs_tts/english

UPDATE!

Facelifts can go horribly wrong. Last time we checked, Michael Jackson's nuts were up around his ears, dangling there like a pair of hairy Pat Butcher earrings.

Aware of such unsightly hazards Konami hired a brilliant gaming surgeon, namely Silicon Knights, to reconstruct Metal Gear Solid's face for GameCube and it's turned out a handsome brute.

LESSONS FROM THE MASTER

The operation wasn't solely cosmetic either. The nimble-fingered developer has fiddled with the innards of the original PSone title to bring the gameplay as well as the appearance to the standard of Sons Of Liberty on PS2.

Most of the best elements from Metal Gear Solid 2 have been shoehorned into the GameCube remake, like being able to pop your mulleted head around corners for a better view and fighting in first-person. Plus now you can muck about and interact with your surroundings so much more than you ever could in the PSone sneaker.

Remember the food storeroom in MGS 2 with all the destructible grub? Playing with fire extinguishers? Expect to

NON-IDENTICAL TWINS

Twin Snake's shoves a Claymore up its predecessor's hidey-hole, and explodes onto GameCube as the best looking creep 'n' kill escapade yet to hit the machine.

Stand them side-by-side and the Cube version of Metal Gear Solid makes the PSone game look like it was created using a pocket calculator. Both games are blood brothers, but it's obvious which sibling has the superior genes. Check it out...

STARE DEATH IN THE FACE

In the PSone game you'd just shoot enemies from a third-person perspective. It wasn't very engaging, and there was little finesse to the fighting. But in Twin Snakes - like on the old PC version - you can use your weapons in first person. Many of the guards carry shields in the remake, so you have to be tactical and as well as accurate in order to stay alive

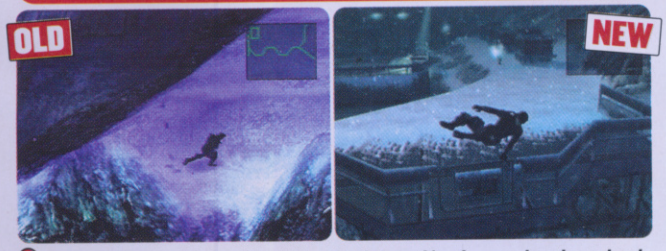
SMOOTH CRIMINALS

As you'd expect, Konami has overhauled all the character models in Twin Snakes. Now, instead of battling blocky guards with heads like cornflake packets the enemies are amazingly detailed and behave much more menacingly. If you zoom in using your scope you can even see the stitching on their balaclavas

THAT'S A WRAP

We remember watching the cutscenes in the original game back in 1998 and thinking that graphics couldn't get much better than this. Shows what we know, because when we replayed the PSone version this month, why, they looked like utter cack. Konami has completely redone all the movie snippets, as well as added extra footage. No epic 45-minute ramblings like in Sons Of Liberty though. Phew!

UNEXPECTED ERECTIONS



If you played the original you'll quickly notice that new bits of scenery have been placed throughout the landscapes in Twin Snakes. Here we can see a spanking new set of railings has appeared by the cliff edge, and you'll spot that Snake can hang off ledges in this version, just as he could in his debut PS2 outing. However, more scenery means more hiding places. Could make it too easy, then...

IF LOOKS COULD KILL

You can't knock Twin Snakes when it comes to atmosphere. The way the snow realistically blusters across the terrain and sticks to the screen when you switch to first person, the brilliantly moody lighting and slick new character animations. There are no rough edges here. A world apart from the dodgy polygons and ropey effects of Snake's PlayStation days

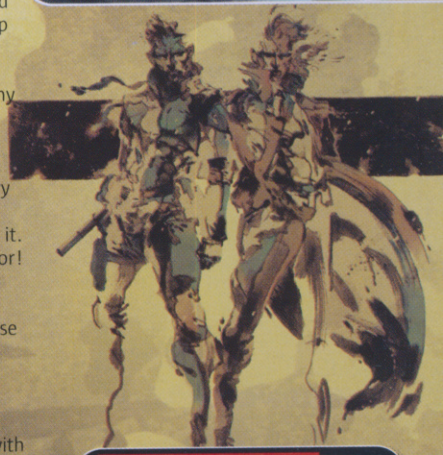
Contrary to popular belief cuddling dead people doesn't bring them back to life

If a guard catches a glimpse of anything weird in the terrain, unusual shadows or anything suspicious they'll come and investigate thoroughly

You're unarmed at the beginning of Twin Snakes too, so avoid being seen at all costs or the guards will blind you to death with their flashlights

get caught up in plenty of similarly stupid and entertaining activities here.

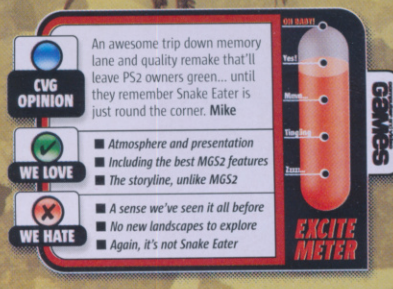
Konami has also included MGS2's most famous feature... searchable lockers! But these haven't just been scattered around so that you can have a good snoop at the porn posters guards have pinned up. Well they have, but there's a more practical reason why they've made it in. When you killed an enemy in the PSone original their body magically vanished, but in Twin Snakes every corpse stays put. This means that you've got to dispose of it or hide it. Exactly what lockers were made for!



NO SNEAKY SURPRISES

We're the first to concede that these additional features in Twin Snakes are not original ideas, but their inclusion only help improve what was already an amazing stealth experience. And as was the case with Capcom's Resident Evil remake, it's the fine-tuning of the gameplay, heightened atmosphere, and revamped visuals that make you want to relive the adventure.

Twin Snakes is what Hideo Kojima always dreamed the original should have been, and GameCube owners get it all to themselves. Problem is, no matter how much fun it's sure to be, it's not Metal Gear Solid 3. CVG



FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR

PUBLISHER
THQ
DEVELOPER
PANDEMIC
OUT
SPRING

IN A NUTSHELL

Originally developed as a training tool for the US Army, Full Spectrum Warrior is a real-time strategy game where your two squads must work as a team to progress.

AVAILABLE ON
XBOX

WWW.THQ.COM

A desolate city street in an unnamed foreign city, the desert wind continues to blow hot sand in your face, your lungs burn from the black noxious cloud spiralling from the stack of burning rubber tyres impairing your vision.

KER-ACK! A hail of bullets flies past your shoulder. The crumbling cement wall provides little shelter but it's all that's between you and death. You bark orders at your support team. They follow, flanking your position. The sound of suppressing fire fills the air. You peer out from your cover and aim at the lone gunman who's pinned you down for the last ten minutes – with a single shot he slumps to the ground. There's no time to celebrate, you've only just started the level...

Not many videogames start life as a US Army training tool. Full Spectrum Warrior did. In a marketplace crowded by first-person shooters offering increasingly extravagant weaponry, sumptuous locations and intelligent enemies, FSW offers a flipside. This isn't an all-guns blazing action title rewarding targeting accuracy. Despite it's looks it's not even a first-person shooter. Full Spectrum Warrior offers the most intense and atmospheric real-time strategy game we've seen, where every footstep is crucial and negotiating ten feet is as taxing as any level of Doom III.

STAND TO ATTENTION

The reason FSW is so demanding is that it aims to be accurate. The US Army didn't want a game that rewarded shooting – they claim there's no training value in such a product – instead the focus was placed on tactics. Teaching foot soldiers the importance of teamwork, how to be a squad leader and how to effectively take care of volatile situations.

The same strategies and skills are used in the Xbox version. You take control of two squads, Alpha and Bravo Team. Each squad consists of four soldiers – a Team Leader, Rifleman, Grenadier and Automatic Rifleman. Each member has individual skills, which will be called upon during a mission. For example the Grenadier is useful offensively against armoured vehicles and defensively by launching smoke grenades to create cover. You can switch squads with a single button press, and using both teams co-operatively is key.

ALPHA TEAM MOVE OUT

In a game that aims to recreate the intensity of modern urban warfare, the AI is absolutely vital. A lot of the AI

Sound effects add an extra level of realism to the action

Strike a pose for the camera boys

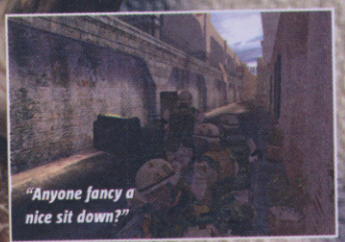
IS IT ME YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

The ability to provide cover and to target any potential surprise attack is key in FSW. Seeing the area from your soldiers' perspective is vital to planning.

A fog of war effect can be called upon that displays the targeting range of each soldier, with the fogged areas indicating where you're vulnerable..

The team are facing the same way, but have a good view to the end of the street

The end of the street is covered, but the open doorways on the left pose a threat



Realistic smoke and wind hampers vision

The Grenadier lobs his stuff into the action

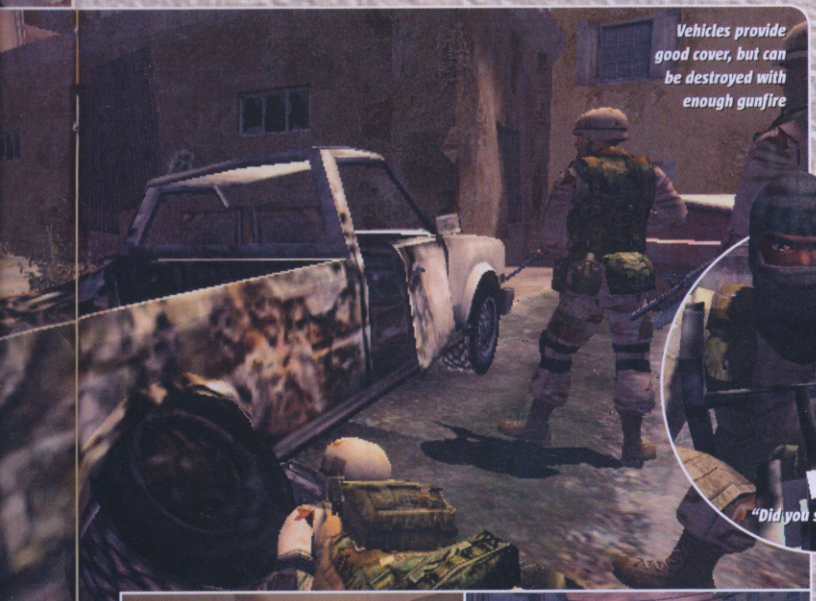
HOLSTER YOUR WEAPON

Despite the detailed 3D visuals and some armed and dangerous soldiers, don't be fooled by the nature of the game itself. Full Spectrum Warrior may look like a first-person shooter but the actual mechanics of the game are anything but.

Action is controlled by squad orders where a 'safely and slowly' approach is most effective. Any all-guns-blazing tactics are simply suicidal.

Alpha and Bravo Teams protect each over

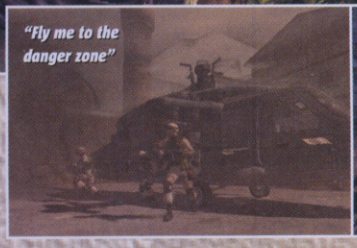
Look, every corner successfully covered...



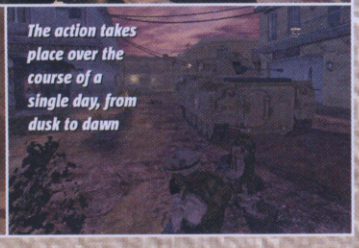
Vehicles provide good cover, but can be destroyed with enough gunfire

"Did you spill my pint?"

Your squad will engage the enemy until you give the order to cease fire



"Fly me to the danger zone"

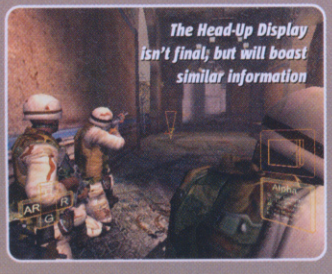


The action takes place over the course of a single day, from dusk to dawn

SIR, YES SIR!

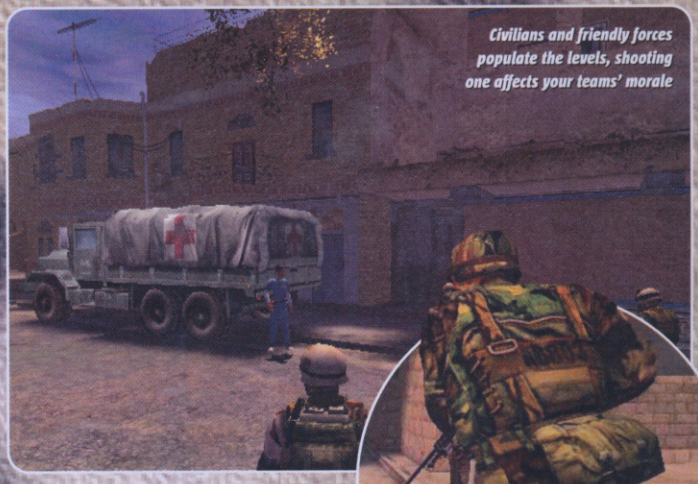
The Army version of Full Spectrum Warrior was tailored to meet their demands, with sergeants contributing ideas. From here developers Pandemic started designing a home version that would offer the same tactical nature of play.

The differences between the two versions are minimal. The Army version contains no Head-Up Display information and offers more statistical analysis after a level. Everything else is almost identical.

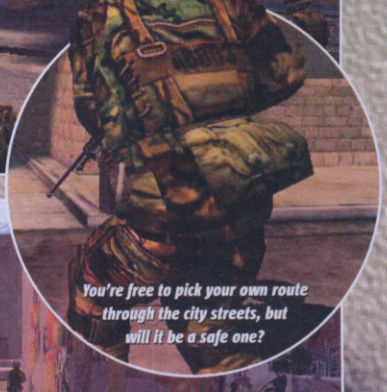


The Head-Up Display isn't final, but will boast similar information

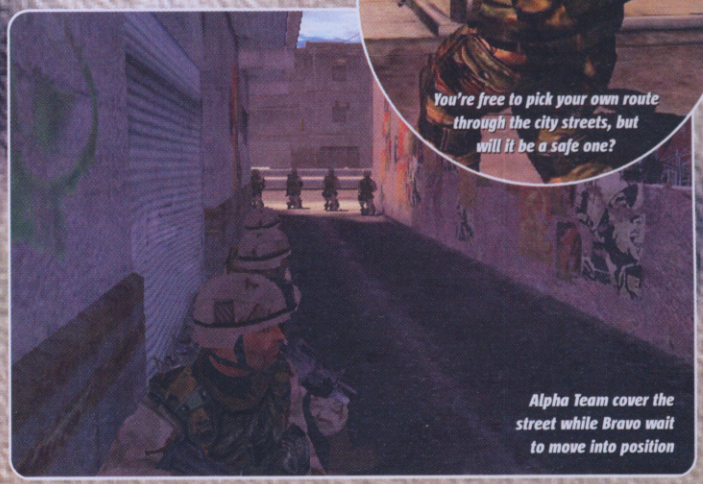
The Army expects their soldiers to use the audio to gather vital information



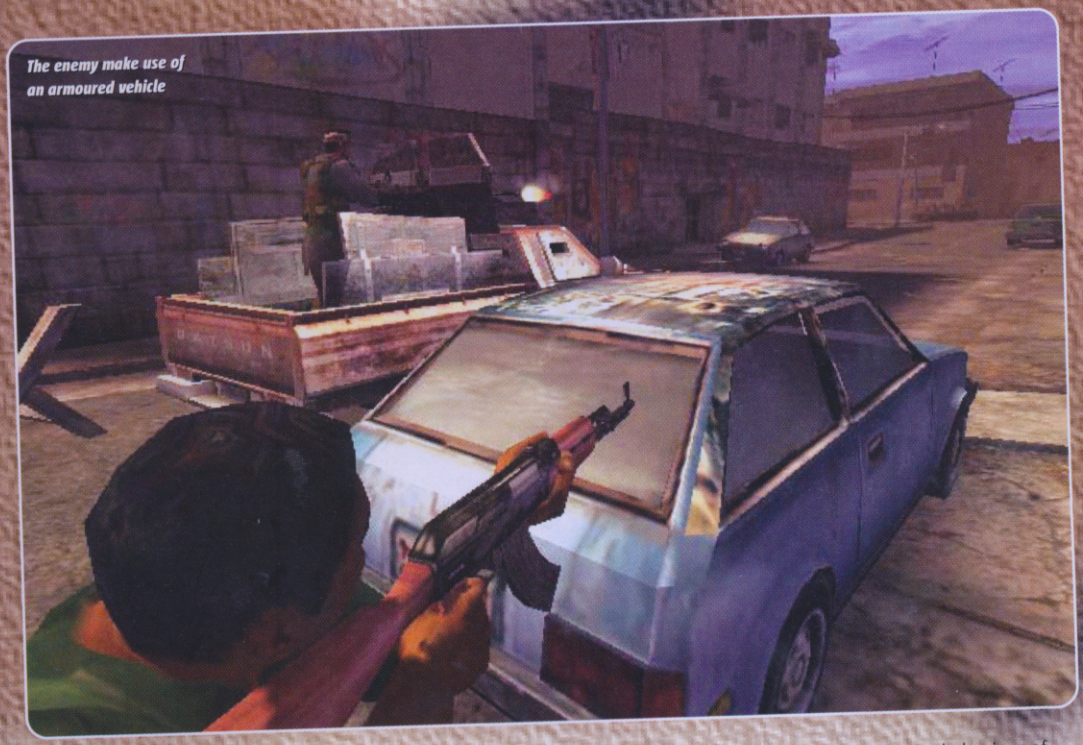
Civilians and friendly forces populate the levels, shooting one affects your teams' morale



You're free to pick your own route through the city streets, but will it be a safe one?



Alpha Team cover the street while Bravo wait to move into position


The enemy make use of an armoured vehicle

routines in FSW come from army doctrine as to how team members should operate. It's this accuracy that will impose the biggest obstacle to players. The US Army is trained not to retreat but to stand ground, even under heavy fire. It's up to you to issue the command to retreat and take cover in a heavy firefight.

A real squad leader will also form commands based on what their team are telling him, whether it be about an enemy target or each member's ammo count. So that you can do the same, there's a lot of voice acting in the game. The authentic reaction of soldiers to enemy gunfire and shelling is likely to earn the game an Adult rating. By paying attention to what they say, it's possible to play the game without having to look at any of the on-screen aides.

The environments, behaviour of your team and enemies – even the weather – are all certainly realistic. As are the missions. They are taut, intense and require meticulous planning and execution just to survive a few steps. A row of buildings with several open windows is a death trap. A parked car on a street corner partially blocks your vision and could be used to ambush your position.

MAN DOWN!

Part of the military doctrine imposed on the game includes taking care of your wounded. US combat troops will always make the retrieval of fallen comrades a more important objective than the original mission.

With such small squads, the combat effectiveness is greatly reduced when you lose a team member. Despite this obstacle you must safely secure areas for your wounded to be airlifted by helicopter to safety.

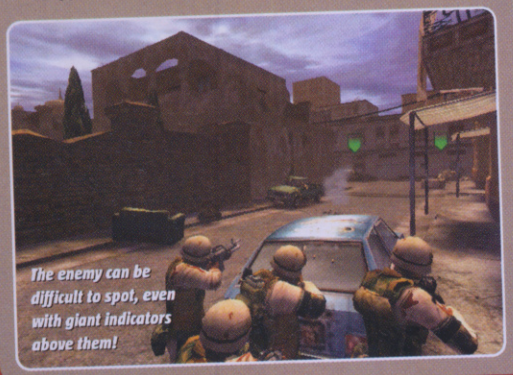
With a man down you're still open to enemy fire, so watch it

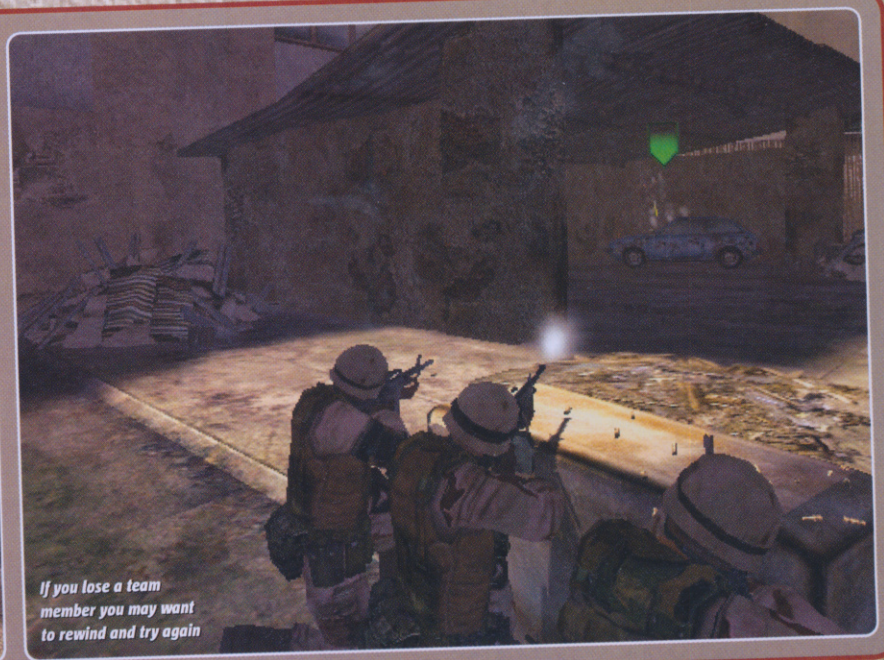
Carrying the wounded uses up vital manpower, but you have to do it

CAN I GET A RE-EE-WIND?

One Army request was the ability to analyse replays of the entire mission. Pandemic has utilised this to its advantage in the home game. Every action is recorded. Watching a replay you can move the camera to see where your team were exposed, but you can't use it to cheat, enemies will only be drawn in if your team spotted them so you can't scoot to end of a level and jot down all their positions.

You can jump back into the action from any point of the replay. The replays are designed so they can be swapped over Xbox Live. You can create your own scenarios by deliberately wasting ammo and losing squad members and then challenging players to complete seemingly impossible missions.


The enemy can be difficult to spot, even with giant indicators above them!


If you lose a team member you may want to rewind and try again

Patrolling a vital convoy in this mission

Entering buildings requires different skills

Levels are based on what soldiers can expect in combat situations. Global events during 2003 even caused the level designers to rethink some of their plans, with initial designs scrapped as the real world started to imitate their ideas!

Full Spectrum Warrior presents a fresh take on the terrifying art of war, and offers a far less dangerous way of joining the army.

CVG OPINION

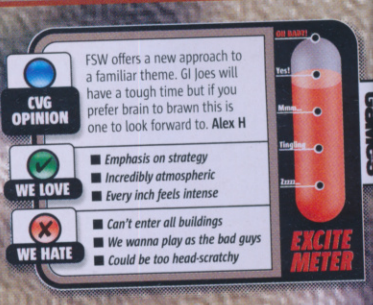
FSW offers a new approach to a familiar theme. GI Joes will have a tough time but if you prefer brain to brawn this is one to look forward to. **Alex H**

WE LOVE

- Emphasis on strategy
- Incredibly atmospheric
- Every inch feels intense

WE HATE

- Can't enter all buildings
- We wanna play as the bad guys
- Could be too head-scratchy



■ PUBLISHER
CODEMASTERS
■ DEVELOPER
INCOG INC. ENTERTAINMENT
■ OUT: MARCH 2004

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Saddle up with the only mountain biking game on PS2. We're talking 14 riders, 20 licensed bikes, 27 tracks over nine mountains and three race types: Freeride, Mountain X and Downhill.

AVAILABLE ON

PS2

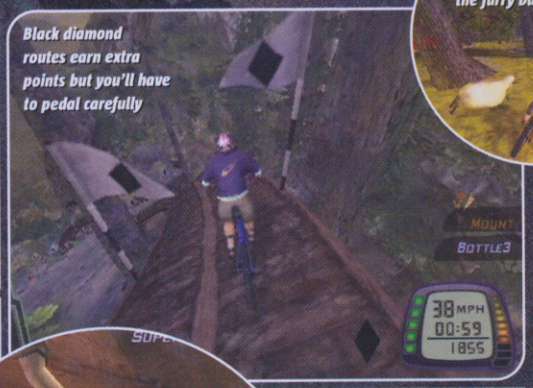
WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM /DOWNHILLDOMINATION

DOWNHILL DOMINATION

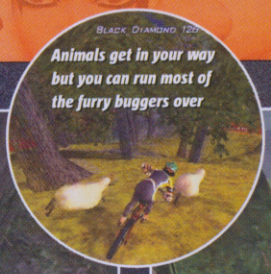
There are two things the world ain't exactly short of: twats driving BMWs, and extreme sports games.

They all look and act the same, and most of them are shit – and the same goes for extreme sports games. Punky soundtracks, the same conservative gameplay. Not so extreme really, eh? At least Downhill Domination is the only mountain bike game available for PS2. It's a truly unique selling point, even if the sport itself's about as popular as double maths first thing on a Monday morning.

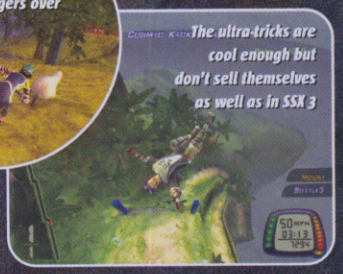
The first-person mode ramps up the speed but it's not the best view



Black diamond routes earn extra points but you'll have to pedal carefully



Animals get in your way but you can run most of the furry buggers over



The ultra-tricks are cool enough but don't sell themselves as well as in SSX 3

You can also batter riders with sticks and chuck bottles at them

Bust out dope tricks and listen to mountain biking hip-hop straight from the, er, hillsides of Compton

We noticed it was a bit too easy to come first, but things will get balanced out

The most exciting moments come when you're screaming down narrow forest tracks

The mountain tracks are impressively big and there's loads of shortcuts to find

Pressing combos of the shoulder buttons pulls off tricks. That snow's nice

Tight battles for position like this aren't happening as much as we'd like

CHRIST ON A BIKE

That said, things are pretty much as expected. You choose one of the assorted trendy nutcases on offer and bomb it down increasingly obstacle-strewn mountainsides, busting out mental tricks whenever you're a fart's height from the ground. Holding X increases your speed, and a double tap gets your pedals pumping faster than a horny dog on someone's leg.

SPOKIN'

The levels are nicely varied and there's millions of ways to descend the hillside. Tricky routes offer bonus points, but demand precision pedalling at breakneck speeds. And when we say breakneck, we really mean fast enough to break your neck, pop your arms out of their sockets and squish your nuts to puree. Downhill Domination is ridiculously fast, and the framerate stays smoother than Kylie's arsechecks.

Still, we could never get very high off jumps and the tricks seem a bit dull compared to SSX 3's explosive acrobatics. We'd like a bit of extra extremeness, but since Downhill Domination shoogles you down the mountain at such a crazy pace this could be wicked.

The locations are fictional but based on real life locations like Monument Valley

High-altitude drop-offs show mountains at their best. Get a good look before falling to your death

PEDAL TO THE METAL

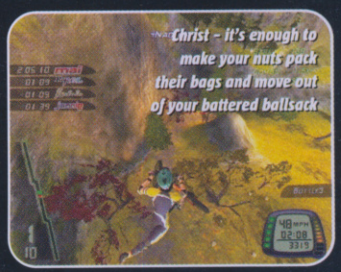
Another extreme sports game, another extreme career mode.

Winning races unlocks new bikes and equipment and lets you emblazon your clothes with sponsors' logos. You capitalist whore...

Rock on! Leave your opponents choking on your grit and snatch a maximum cash prize

As your reputation and bank balance grows, manufacturers will chuck their bikes at you

And you'll be able to sell your soul to the man by wearing big bloody trademarks on your chest. Extreme!


Christ – it's enough to make your nuts pack their bags and move out of your battered ballsack

CVG OPINION

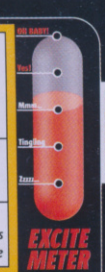
We're not sure if mountain biking's cool enough to scale the peaks of extreme sports greatness, but this is fast, fun, and a bit different. **Graeme**

WE LOVE

- Spoke-blurringly fast
- Big mountains, loads of routes
- Licensed bikes and gear

WE HATE

- Another extreme sports game
- Underwhelming jumps and tricks
- Mountain biking is so last decade



- PUBLISHER: MIDWAY
- DEVELOPER: MIDWAY
- OUT: SUMMER 2004
- ONLINE GAMING

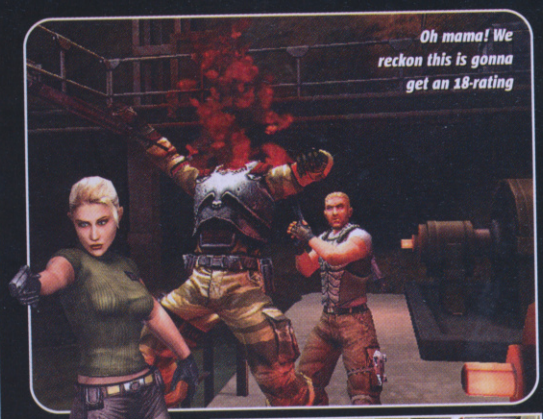
IN A NUTSHELL

A head-popping action game that swaps guns for devastating psychic powers. Amazing physics and hyper-cool interactive levels mean you can make like Psycho Mantis and smash up the whole world.

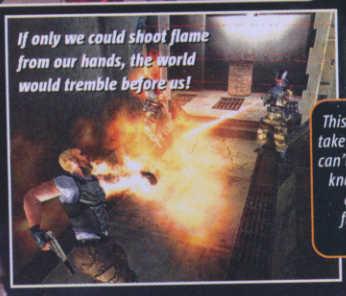
AVAILABLE ON PS2

ALSO ON XBOX

WWW.MIDWAY.COM



Oh mama! We reckon this is gonna get an 18-rating



If only we could shoot flame from our hands, the world would tremble before us!

Psi-Ops

THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

Snapping soldiers' necks and tearing their flesh apart with bullets is fun for sure, but wouldn't it be better if you could lift them up then thwack them against walls, painting the tiles with claret?

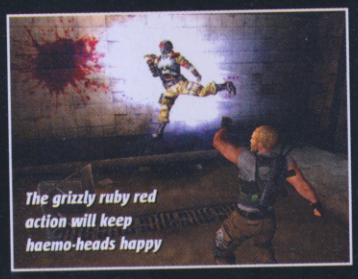
Or how about psychically suspending them midair then shooting 'em so they somersault, spraying sticky entrails. That's what Psi-Ops is all about. Sweet.

This is you, Nick Scryer, complete with mysterious past and hard-man hair

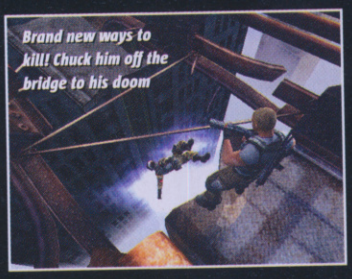
MORE POWER THAN PROFESSOR X

We were treated to a special hands-on test of an early version of Psi-Ops. Unveiled as ESPionage a while back, the game has since had a name change and a complete overhaul. Gone are the stinky visuals and generic action, and in their place are the components of what's shaping up to be an amazing, mind-bending adventure.

The setting is standard action game stuff like secret labs and military bases, but the way you explore the world and manipulate it with your brainiac powers makes the game feel like a huge puzzle with loads of ways for you to solve it. Check out the big screen above right for a glimpse of the non-linear play we're lovin' so much, and expect a to hear lot more about this psychic surprise in the run up to its Summer release.



The grizzly ruby red action will keep haemo-heads happy



Brand new ways to kill! Chuck him off the bridge to his doom

PLAY IT YOUR WAY

Having Psi powers in a real-world setting means your approach to defeating enemies and passing obstacles is limited only by your imagination.

Check out this bridge for example. You need to get across but there's a guy who wants to fill you with lead on the other side, as well as a hole bigger than Simon Cowell's gob that you could easily fall down. What can you do?

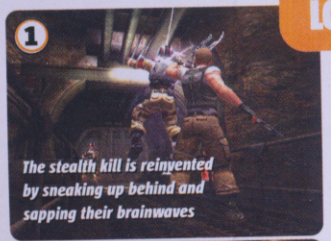
Chuck enemies around like they're lifeless ragdolls. A laugh? You betcha!

LOOK MA, NO HANDS!

You learn some fearsome psychic abilities as you play. And while Psi energy is kinda limited, you're free to experiment with powers, rather than worry about using up too much brain juice.

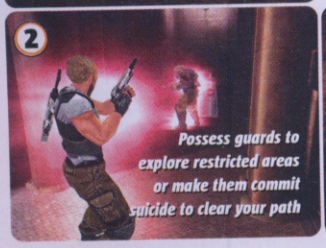
Check out how the level pans out using Astral Project, toast enemies with your pyrokinesis and even activate auric sight to see invisible energy trails. Now that rocks!

1



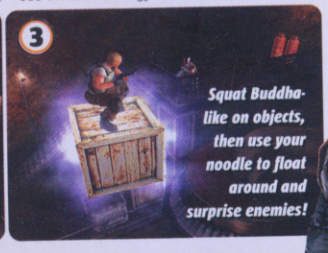
The stealth kill is reinvented by sneaking up behind and sapping their brainwaves

2



Possess guards to explore restricted areas or make them commit suicide to clear your path

3



Squat Buddha-like on objects, then use your noodle to float around and surprise enemies!

CVG OPINION

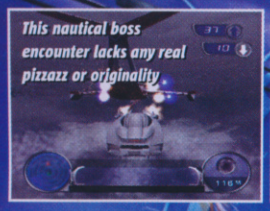
We're creaming over the way the psychic powers are integrated into the action rather than just a tacked on. This is gonna be a '04 hit for sure. **Lee**

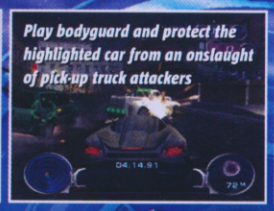
WE LOVE

- Wicked-cool psychic abilities
- There's blood everywhere
- Fantastic bosses

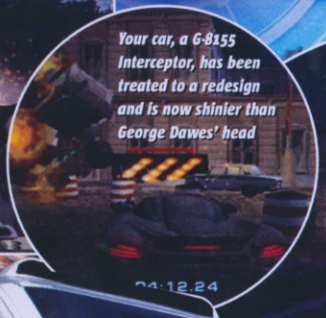
WE HATE

- So many ways to manipulate the levels they need to make sure you can't 'break' the game





SPYHUNTER 2



■ PUBLISHER
MIDWAY
■ DEVELOPER
ANGEL STUDIOS
■ OUT: FEBRUARY

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Midway's rampage racer screeches back onto PS2 with more street-based espionage. Yes, it's time for more arcade action with a morphing motor and enough guns and ammunition to sink the Titanic. Er, again...

AVAILABLE ON
PS2

ALSO ON
XBOX, CUBE

WWW.MIDWAY.COM

You can probably guess from this month's cover that we get a kick from stuff that transforms into *other* stuff. Only last night we saw a pole-dancing policewoman transform into a naked hussy capable of playing professional ping-pong without a paddle. Genius.

ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

So you'd think that Spy Hunter 2's sleek shape-shifting vehicle would have our temperatures rising. Not so. Our first hands-on playtest has left us colder than a witch's tit.

We scored Spy Hunter's PS2 debut seven out of ten way back in 2001. A decent first effort with loads of potential. The whole 'it's a car, it's a bike, it's a boat' thing was charming and fun. However, this gimmick grew tiresome, especially as the levels and objectives were extremely linear and stupidly one-dimensional.

We expected that Angel Studios (now called Rockstar San Diego), famed for its work on Midnight Club II and new developer on this sequel, would tackle these issues head on. Sadly the five level demo we've had access to this month plays so much like its two-year-old predecessor that you'd be excused for mistaking them as the same game were it not for the minor visual overhaul and a couple of new features. Again each level sees you attempting to complete fixed objectives, such as escorting special vehicles through baddy-infested roads.

There are new scenarios, like a destruction arena challenge and gun turret section, but these are painfully uninspired. Plus your vehicle has only acquired a Beadle-sized handful of new weapons and abilities, such as being able to transform into an off-road truck that makes a Ford Transit van look cool. Hey, maybe the other 15 stages that weren't available for play are where the real fun and innovation lie? Hmm, maybe not... CVG

Double-tap the accelerator to boost ahead of these armoured foes and then start pooping mines like crazy

CVG OPINION
Unless the finished version pulls mucho magic out of its bulletproof ass, fans of the last game are in for a disappointing ride. **Mike**

WE LOVE
- *Tight handling and controls*
- *Masses of highly explosive tarmac action*

WE HATE
- *Unimaginative stages*
- *Boring enemies and battles*
- *Dull-as-dishwater visuals*

EXCITE METER

HYPER STREET FIGHTER II
The Anniversary Edition

■ PUBLISHER
CAPCOM
■ DEVELOPER
CAPCOM
■ OUT: SPRING

AVAILABLE ON
PS2

ONLINE GAMING

WWW.CAPCOM.COM

To celebrate 15 years of fireballs Capcom is releasing a new version of Street Fighter II that will have hardcore fans spooling for the fight of their lives.

This anniversary special is the first time that you get to brawl with all versions of every character from the World Warrior, Turbo, Dash, Super and Super X games.

The Japanese version comes bundled with a DVD of the Street Fighter II anime movie from way back in 1994. It'll also feature stacks of extras such as never-before-seen artwork.

Capcom is still to decide whether this limited edition package will be launched in the UK. However we can reveal that the PAL version definitely features a 60Hz option. Don't miss our hard-hitting review next month.

Each stage is a perfect match of the arcade original, right down to the last pixel

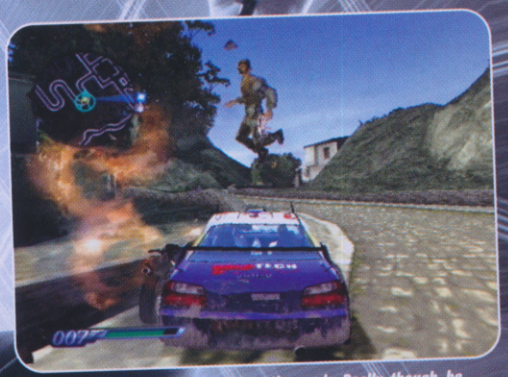
M. Bison suffers a nasty case of heartburn at the hands of Dhalsim. Lay off the curries, M

WE LOVE
- *All the greatest 2D fighters*
- *The prospect of loads of special extras*

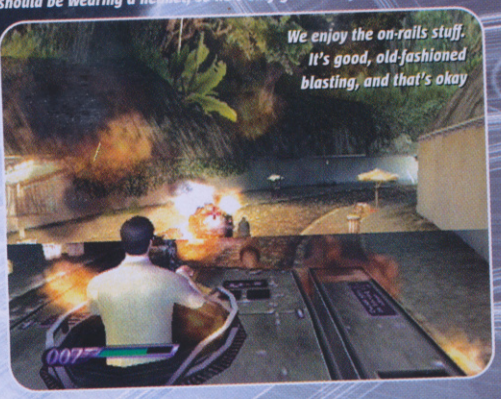
WE HATE
- *No new characters or stages, boo-hoo*
- *It's only coming to PS2*

EXCITE METER

"Honestly mate, there's something on your back." Later levels are chocka with goons



Bloody biker, they think they own the roads. Really, though, he should be wearing a helmet, so he's only got himself to blame



We enjoy the on-rails stuff. It's good, old-fashioned blasting, and that's okay

007™ EVERYTHING OR NOTHING™

PUBLISHER
EA
DEVELOPER
EA
OUT: MARCH 5

ONLINE GAMING x4

IN A NUTSHELL

We go hands-on and full-throttle with all the levels from the spicy mixture of playing styles that is the new Bond game. You'll think you ARE Pierce Brosnan after playing this big-budget action event.

AVAILABLE ON
PS2

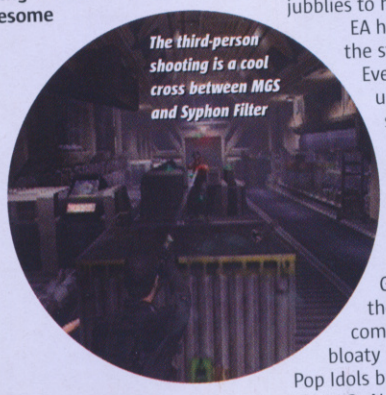
ALSO ON
XBOX, CUBE

WWW.EAGAMES.COM/OFFICIAL/007_EVERYTHINGORNOTHING/

UPDATE!

This is no GoldenEye. Bond's latest videogame-exclusive quest to save the world is an arcade action game that mixes traditional running and shooting with driving cool vehicles and piloting awesome gadget-laden craft.

The action is played out in third-person, forcing you to eyeball Pierce Brosnan's bubble butt and ugly mug whether you want to or not. EA paid a lot of money to use his likeness so we reckon they want their money's worth. Whatever, the third-person view makes the game feel and play very different from the classic GoldenEye or EA's recent smash NightFire.



The third-person shooting is a cool cross between MGS and Syphon Filter

TOUGH IN A TUX

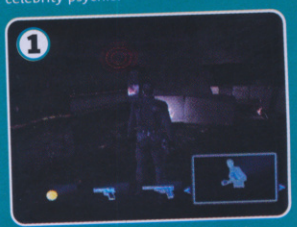
From the explosive opening abseiling scene-setter to the high-speed chase through Egypt's Valley of the Kings and beyond, playing Everything Or Nothing is like living all of the best Bond action sequences ever. Classic villains like Jaws return, and of course there's a whole gaggle of saucy Bond Girls ready to jiggle their jubblies to help save the world.

EA has certainly pulled out all the stops in an attempt to make Everything Or Nothing the ultimate Bond game. It seems like there's an explosion every couple of seconds, and an enemy to cap at every step. The emphasis is on pure action and adrenaline, and this is why we say it's no GoldenEye. Comparing the two games is like comparing Will Young with bloaty Michelle McManus – both Pop Idols but very different types of star. Everything Or Nothing is all glitz and sparkle, its big budget worn proudly on its sleeve. What it lacks in gameplay subtlety and stealthy tension it hopes to make up for with its

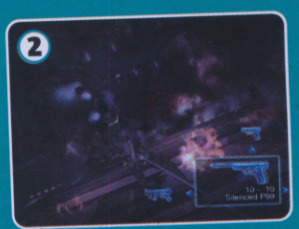
BOND SENSE OR NONSENSE?

One of the more questionable additions to the Bond gameplay is the ability to scope out your environment with a kind of 'second sight' called Bond Sense.

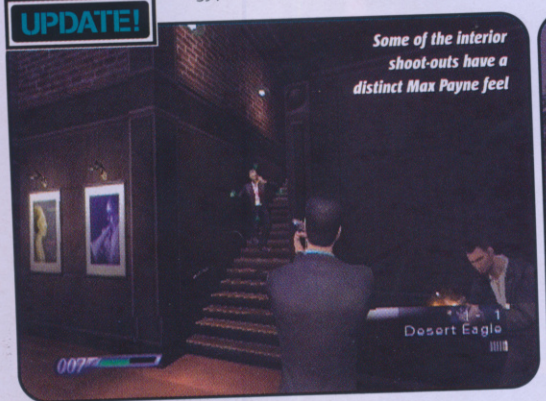
Pressing left on the D-pad freezes the action and highlights important objects you can interact with. Handy if you're stuck, for sure, but we're not sure the world is ready for James Bond, celebrity psychic.



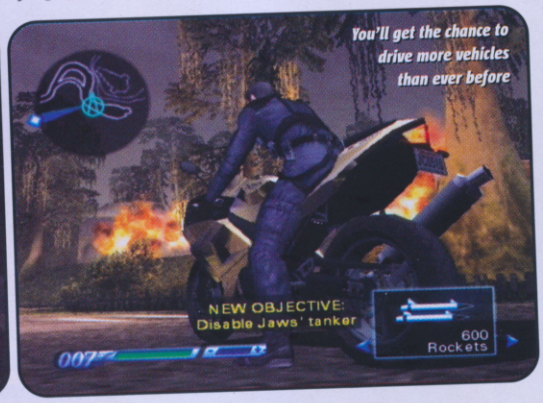
See where normal peepers can't reach with your odd new ability



The Sense effect is pretty and gives you a breather from the carnage



Some of the interior shoot-outs have a distinct Max Payne feel



You'll get the chance to drive more vehicles than ever before

BEST BOND EVER?

Well, is it? It's sure as hell trying to be. Check out some of the actors they've got for a start.

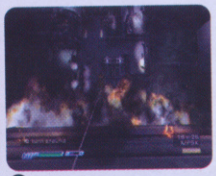
In fact, we reckon EA have employed a crack team of Oxford University brainiacs to work out the perfect mathematical formula for a Bond adventure. Yeah, maths sucks, but our equation's got boobs in it, so pay attention.

BEST BOND OPENING SCENE

Everyone knows the first five minutes of a Bond movie rock, so when it comes to the game Everything Or Nothing is no exception...

He's on this building! What's he gonna do?

Holy monkeys! He's jumped! He's surely a goner!

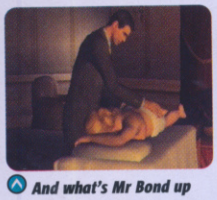


But he's got a thingamajigger abseil down!

BEST BOND BIRDS

What would Bond movies be without tits and ass? Crap, that's what. Everything Or Nothing ups the skirt stakes with some top-drawer birdage.

That vest makes Shannon Elizabeth's tits look great. Shame about the hat, though



And what's Mr Bond up to here? James Bond? James Boner more like

That's supermodel Heidi Klum, that is. Looks good, but she behaves BAD!

BEST BOND MOTORS

Riding on the bumper of the birds are Bond's top of the range motors, complete with Q's special 'modifications'. Check these li'l beauties out...

The good old Aston Martin's in there too. Rocket launchers come as standard

This is original – in a later level you have to take part in a rally. Wild!

BEST BOND GADGETS

Bond's Gadget Shop isn't filled with radio controlled UFOs and singing fish – he's got exploding spiders and stealth cloaks.

John Cleese does his turn as Q, the wise-cracking guru of the gadget

You can control these wee spiders to get into rooms and blow up baddies

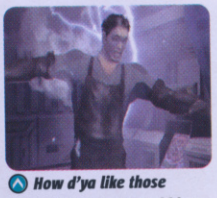
Can you see James in this shot? No? Ha, you're not meant to!

BEST BOND BADDIES

Bond's fought some quality bad dudes over the years, and we're delighted to see some of the best making a comeback, including our old friend Jaws.

Check it out, it's only bloody Jaws! Obviously doesn't brush twice a day

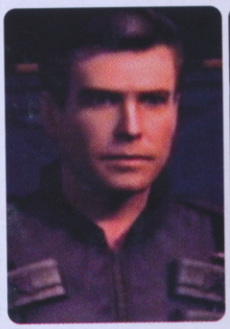
Old metal molars might be a big bugger, but you can still smack him about



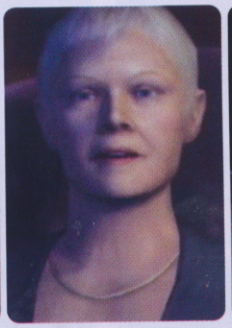
How d'ya like those apples, Gnasher? Send him back to Bond villain hell

BEST BOND CAST

Bond games of the past have been lacking a quality cast – not any more! Loads of the actors from the movies lend their images and voices, plus some who have never even been in a Bond film!

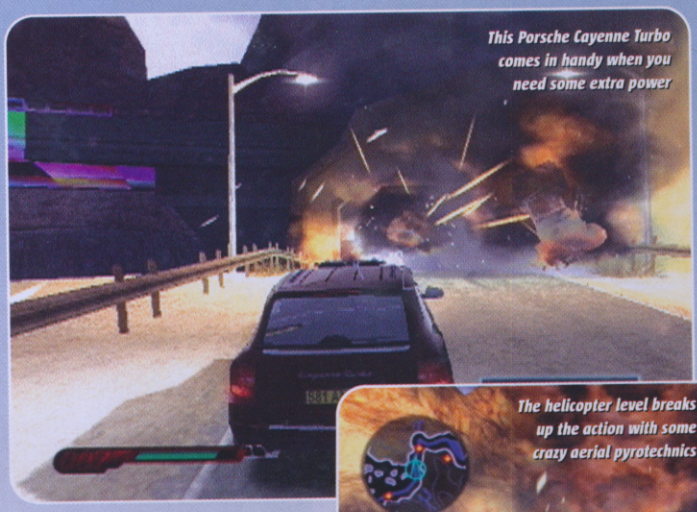


It's the first time Pierce Brosnan has lent his smooth visage and his voice

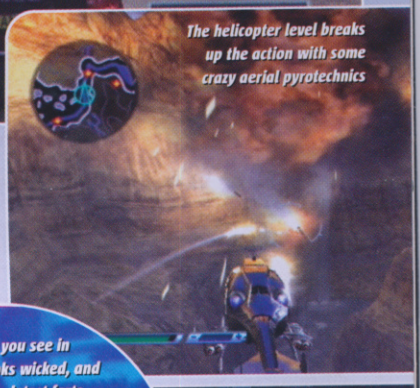


Fancypants Dame Judi Dench pops up to order you around a bit. Aristocrats, eh?

Serial bad guy actor Willem Dafoe puts in a cracking turn as the villain



This Porsche Cayenne Turbo comes in handy when you need some extra power



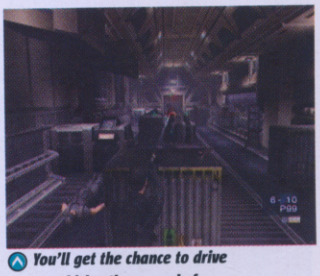
The helicopter level breaks up the action with some crazy aerial pyrotechnics

brash, balls-out attitude, and enough variety in the missions that even Q might struggle to keep up.

We probably don't need to say that if you're a James Bond fan you're sure to find Everything Or Nothing as orgasmic an experience as sharing a bubble bath with Halle Berry. For everyone else it looks like there'll be lots to enjoy too. Clearly, unashamedly aimed at the mass market rather than the hardcore player and may be too simplistic for some, but what it does it looks set to do with all the suave style of Mr Bond himself. CVG

Thermal lets you see in the dark, looks wicked, and can probably detect farts

Good old James, eh? Shooting it out in a mineshaft and not a speck of dust on his suit



You'll get the chance to drive more vehicles than ever before

CVG OPINION

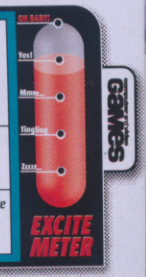
Funky gadgets, sexy motors, girls and all the other Bond bits in one non-stop, vodka martini-fuelled package. We've been expecting you to like it. **Lee**

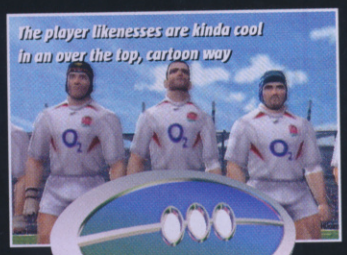
WE LOVE

- Variety by the bucketload
- Silky blockbuster visuals
- All those lovely ladies

WE HATE

- Should concentrate on one genre
- It's just not GoldenEye, is it? Aaah, GoldenEye...





WCR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY

PUBLISHER ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER SWORDFISH
OUT: MARCH
AVAILABLE ON PS2
XBOX, PC
ONLINE GAMING
WWW.ACCLAIM.COM

Apparently there was some big rugby tournament recently and England did quite well. One bloke who's quite good at kicking the ball was so pleased he drove his car into a tree.

We checked if you could do that in World Rugby Championship. You can't. What you can do is indulge your new-found passion for rugby in a fast, arcadey stylee. There are 20 international teams to choose from, with the England team fully licenced and liveried. The player likenesses are adequate but the whole thing's shot through with a cartoony visual style that works well.

RUCK AND ROLL

This is hard-rucking, quick-scrumming fun. When the ball's in play shoulder buttons pass to the side and you can pull off jazzy little juke moves, and when a scrum, ruck or maul develops you've got to batter the X button like a Frenchman slyly stamping on an opponent's head.

We had a good laugh playing it and since EA's Rugby 2004 was a bit of a missed tackle we've got high hopes this'll cause a scrum amongst rugger fans.

You can add and remove players from rucks to push hard or cover space

Scrums are our favourite bit – you gain leverage by bloottering the X button

WE LOVE
- Cartoony players
- Faster than a winger
- Cool rucks and mauls

WE HATE
- Tackles not hard-hitting
- Kicking system needs work
- Maybe a little too simplistic

EXCITE METER

CVG GAMES

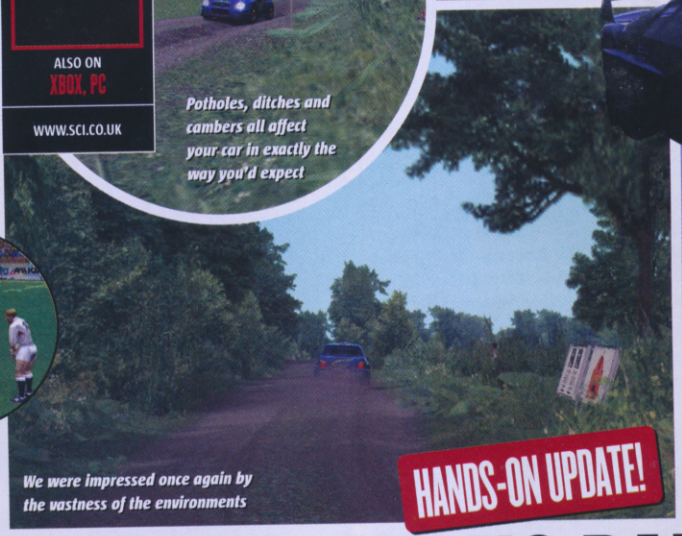
PUBLISHER SCI
DEVELOPER WARTHOG SWEDEN
OUT: APRIL 2004
ONLINE GAMING x8

IN A NUTSHELL

Strapped in, big helmet on, we get behind the wheel of SCi's hardcore rally racer. It's got eight licensed cars and six real-life rallies, and every single nut and bolt is endorsed by rally driver Richard Burns.

AVAILABLE ON PS2
ALSO ON XBOX, PC
WWW.SCI.CO.UK

Captured and killed by Cap'n Turd in 1882, these ghost cars haunt the roads



HANDS-ON UPDATE!

The road might be straight, but that doesn't make it easy to drive along, trust us on this

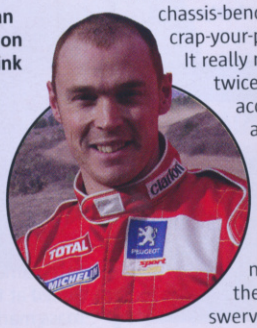
RICHARD BURNS RALLY

So you've mastered Colin McRae? You can powerslide round corners on a ten-pence piece? You think that if you got behind the wheel of a real rally car you'd be able to mix it with the big boys, right?

Well, if Richard Burns Rally is as realistic as we're told it is, then you're wrong. You'd wrap that rally car round a tree quicker than you can say, "Hard left over crest."

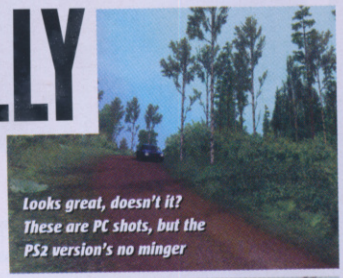
We've had our calloused hands on RBR's steering wheel and, Christ, it's enough to make a grown man cry salty tears of girlyness. This is so realistic it hurts.

The first thing we noticed was how heavy the cars feel. The motors hurtle towards hairpin bends and chassis-bending trees with crap-your-pants momentum. It really makes you think twice about flooring the accelerator and arouses a sticky sense of dread as you scream down the straights.

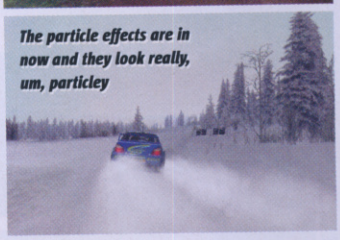


The road surfaces feel scarily real, too – if you nick a bank or pothole the car will bump, swerve and flip. You'll have to be careful about jumps, too. We launched ourselves off a massive crest, and although it felt cool soaring through the air, when we hit the ground we absolutely ruined our motor. You'll have to watch out for imperfections in the road, too – drop a wheel into a ditch and you'll have to fight like a drunken Girls Aloud member to get it out.

It's not for limp-wristed jessies, but then neither's real rallying. Should be a true challenge for fans. CVG



Looks great, doesn't it? These are PC shots, but the PS2 version's no minger



The particle effects are in now and they look really, um, particley

Steer clear of slopes like this – slide down and it'll be a bugger to get out

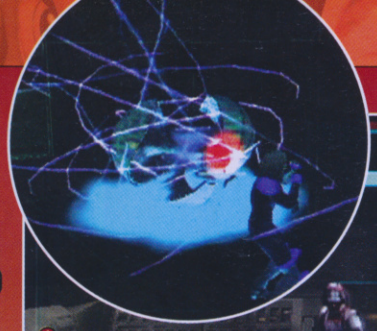
CVG OPINION
A punch in the face for anyone who thinks driving games reflect real life racing. Could be the closest you'll get to the true rally experience. **Graeme**

WE LOVE
- Loads of speed and momentum
- Meaty cars with real weight
- Scarily realistic handling

WE HATE
- Not very many cars and rallies
- Do you want the pain?
- Very, very, very straight-faced

EXCITE METER

CVG GAMES



How deep does the rabbit-hole go? Unfortunately this characterless cyberland doesn't hold any answers. It's all for surface without substance

Whenever an enemy is in sight a little fuzzy window appears at the top of the screen displaying a close-up of their reactions. It's a bit like XIII, except crapper

- PUBLISHER KONAMI
- DEVELOPER KONAMI
- OUT FEBRUARY 2004

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

It's like Metal Gear Solid, except with girls, splashed with a hint of The Matrix. But don't go wetting your knickers with excitement just yet, because this cocktail isn't nearly as tasty as it sounds.

AVAILABLE ON PS2

WWW.KONAMIJPN.COM/PRODUCTS/CYGIRLS

UPDATE!

CY GIRLS

Slap a pair of false titties onto Raiden from Metal Gear 2 and he could easily pass as one of the starlets in Cy Girls.

Konami's new Kojima-style espionage actioner is split into two adventures, on two discs, and stars two deadly divas called Ice and Aska. Not only does one of these deadly assassins look like Raiden's long-lost twin, but *both* of them share many of his abilities: the old 'back-to-the-wall-pop-out-and-shoot' move, poncey one-handed cartwheels, diving rolls, and skills with a samurai sword. Each lethal lady fights in a slightly different style – Ice is the gun girlie and Aska specialises in close physical combat – but it's tough to get over-excited about Cy Girls, because the action is about as fresh as Johnny Vegas's jockstrap.

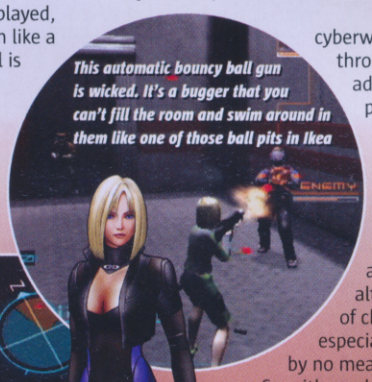
Aska bends over backwards to show people what she's capable of with a samurai sword

CY OF DISAPPOINTMENT

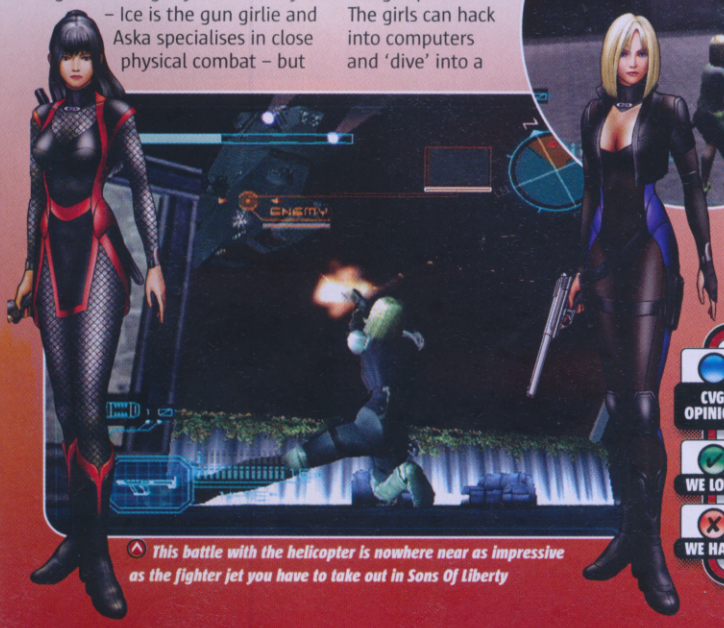
In the earlier levels you'll find yourself beating off attack helicopters with guided missiles and gunning down armies of gormless goons. You're supposed to be stealthy, but from what we've played, bowling in like a bat out of hell is just as effective.

Cy Girls does attempt to mix things up a bit. The girls can hack into computers and 'dive' into a cyberworld at certain points throughout their adventures. Here they pick up new skills in an environment bearing a striking resemblance to The Matrix stripped to its bare green bones. However, dipping in and out of this alternate reality sniffs of cheap gimmickry, especially as the action is by no means out of this world.

So with a splurge of sneak 'n' shoot adventures on the horizon, Cy Girls is most likely to end up skulking in the shadows. CVG



This automatic bouncy ball gun is wicked. It's a bugger that you can't fill the room and swim around in them like one of those ball pits in Ikea



This battle with the helicopter is nowhere near as impressive as the fighter jet you have to take out in Sons Of Liberty

Crouch and sprint along as bullets ricochet overhead. Or stand and fight. You can pop up like a Desperado, unload a few rounds, and duck back into cover at lightning speed

CVG OPINION

Cy Girls lacks the class or clout of other stealth big-timers. As for the girls, we all love busty birds, but they've got to show us a good time too. **Mike**

WE LOVE

- Masses of cool gadgets to muck about with
- Slick character movements

WE HATE

- Tired action set-pieces
- Unoriginal attack moves
- Incredibly dumb AI enemies

EXCITE METER

AUTO MODELLISTA

- PUBLISHER CAPCOM
- DEVELOPER CAPCOM
- OUT MARCH

AVAILABLE ON PS2

ONLINE GAMING x8

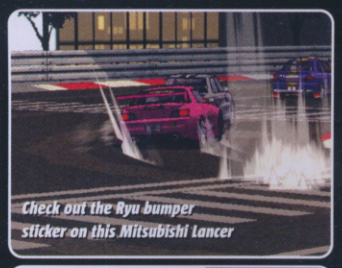
WWW.CAPCOM.COM/AM

Project Gotham 2 has been like a jet of nitrous oxide injected up Xbox Live's bum. We're lovin' it, and welcome more grade-A online racers with arms open and trousers down.

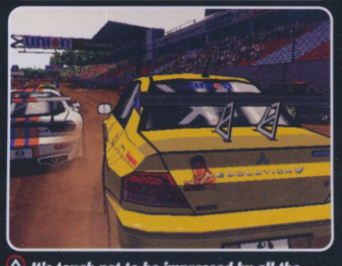
But on hearing that the Xbox version of Auto Modellista is to be online, with up to eight players and voice support, we managed to keep our trousers buttoned up.

Fact is, Capcom's PS2 cartoon racer wasn't a world-class racer, and the Xbox version promises to be no different. The online stuff is all that's new about this version. Sure it's one of the sharpest-looking racers around, but Auto Modellista's on-road action feels clumsy and nowhere near as thrilling as the other tarmac maestros out there. However, it's sure to make worthy rental material.

Do up your garage with all manner of cool Capcom-related bumph



Check out the Ryu bumper sticker on this Mitsubishi Lancer



It's tough not to be impressed by all the wicked skid effects going on here

WE LOVE

- Eight online players at once
- It's got cool communicator headset support

WE HATE

- Not enough cars to mash up
- Plain, dull tracks and naff handling

EXCITE METER

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING: SHOWDOWN

PUBLISHER ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER ACCLAIM STUDIOS AUSTIN
OUT: APRIL
AVAILABLE ON PS2 XBOX
ONLINE GAMING x4
WWW.LEGENDSSHOWDOWN.COM

Hey wrestling fans, time for a history lesson. You have one man to thank for the 'sports entertainment' madness that Vince McMahon shoves down our eager throats every week, and he wasn't 20 stone, didn't have massive muscles, and didn't eat razorblades for breakfast.

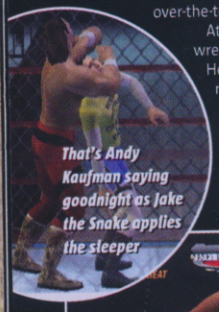
The man who made wrestling a multi-million pound industry was a skinny streak of pish called Andy Kaufman. He was a comedian as well as a wrestler, and by introducing feuds into the sport, he began the crazy character-based madness that we love.

GRAPPLE PIE

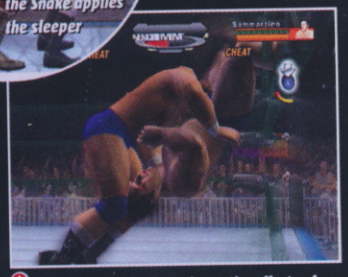
Cool, eh? He's in Legends of Wrestling 3! That's the wicked thing about LOW – in terms of gameplay Smackdown's always given it a killer noogie, but you can't beat the thrill of playing influential wrestling legends like Hulk Hogan, the Ultimate Warrior and, er, Andy Kaufman.

STEROIDS R US

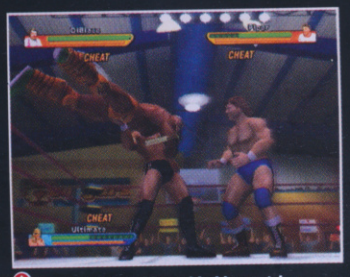
Showdown is a more spectacle-oriented move for the series, and 20 authentic wrestling venues, including the arena in Memphis where Kaufman made his debut, really help out. The character models are big and brassy, with massive man-tits that enhance the over-the-top nature of the sport. At the moment the wrestling is way short of Here Comes the Pain's refined genius. Anyway, LOW wants to celebrate wrestling's redneck, granny-screaming past, and there's enough low-rent madness to do just that.



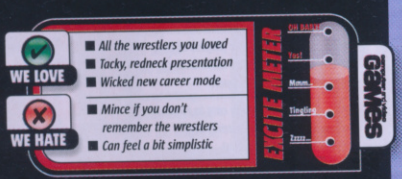
That's Andy Kaufman saying goodnight as Jake the Snake applies the sleeper



Your opponent's face shows the effects of your beating. Blood sends the crowd crazy!



Tag matches, table and ladder matches and Battle Royales are all included



You gotta be careful when pushing other drivers – they might spin out into your line

You can harass poncey Mini drivers until they spin off the road. Finally!

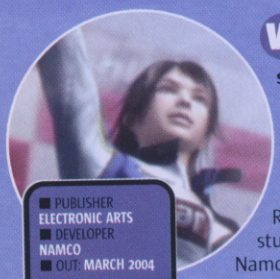
BRISTOL CHANNEL

An admirable attempt to attract female gamers to the masculine driving game genre, or a cynical way to attract men who like looking at boobs? Works for us...

Big paps and a skintight racing suit. Woof!

Meet Gina, your driving nemesis. Remember not to stare at real girls' cleavages like this. It's rude

R: RACING



PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
DEVELOPER NAMCO
OUT: MARCH 2004
ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

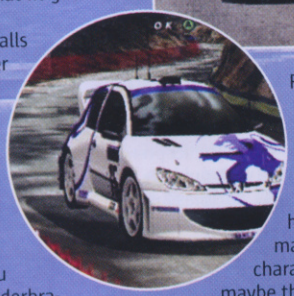
The hot new model rolling off the Ridge Racer production line. Check out 14 real and fantasy tracks, as well as eight different race modes including drag racing, and over 35 licensed autos to collect.

AVAILABLE ON PS2
ALSO ON XBOX, CUBE
WWW.EA.COM

We didn't realise racing games were missing something, but they are. Tits. There's not enough tits in racing games.

This insightful revelation came to us as we played through R: Racing. Not content with stuffing it with sexy cars, Namco decided that fit girls squeezed into boob-sculpting racing overalls would give their racer a head-start on the competition. Who can blame them?

Monaco is definitely the most attractive and realistic-looking track



WOMEN DRIVERS

Not that R: Racing really exploits its tasty totty. In the Racing Life mode you take the role of Wonderbra-rocking Rena, a joyriding ambulance driver who gets her talent noticed by a racing team owner. Sure, she's a woman driver, but you never know – with your help she might even be able to reverse park.

It's like TOCA Race Driver with extra fanny-pads. The storyline adds an extra dimension to the racing, but it all feels a bit, well, Japanese. Rena's too much of a girly-girl and from what we've played it's hard to identify with her as the main character, but maybe that's because we're such manly men with stubbly faces.

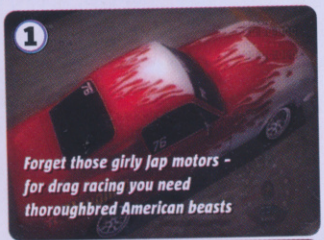
WEARING DRAG

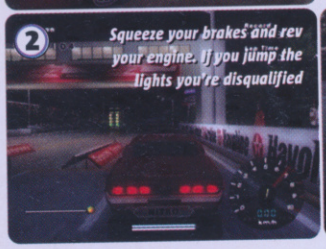
Still, as the narrative progresses new race types become available, explosive rivalries develop, and a tale of corruption emerges. You'll start off in

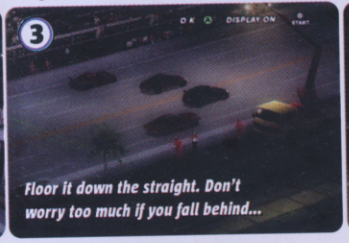
LIFE'S A DRAG

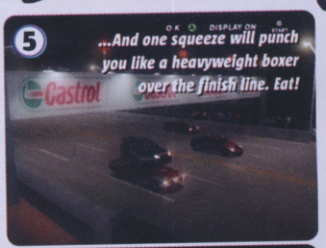
Drag-racing. No, not a couple of old queens at HMV's 50-per-cent-off-Barbra-Streisand sale. It's souped-up cars going at face-meltingly fast speeds.

Need For Speed Underground brought it to our attention and and now R: Racing's having a stab too. Wait for the lights to turn green, blast off the start line, and don't forget to unload your nitro!









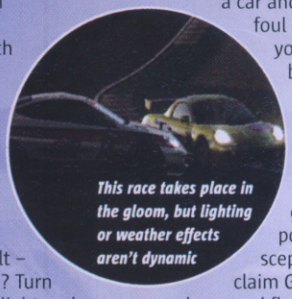
There's diddy old motors to drive as well, although we're still not sure why you'd want to

Fat-assed GT motors flesh out the racing with some hardcore horsepower

Making a nuisance of yourself all over your opponent's bumper is cool

knackered old bangers but progress through powersliding rally cars, ridiculously powerful GT motors, and even put in some wheel time with cool nitro-spitting American drag cars.

So the racing's varied but we're a little suspicious about the handling. Our redlight blinked when we realised automatic braking comes as default – what's the point of that? Turn it off and the steering's light and floaty, but not twitchy enough to match those old-school Ridge Racer thrills. On top of that the pad never even gets close to a rumble, a weird experience after all the force-feedback fun of Gran Turismo.



This race takes place in the gloom, but lighting or weather effects aren't dynamic

ROAD RAGE

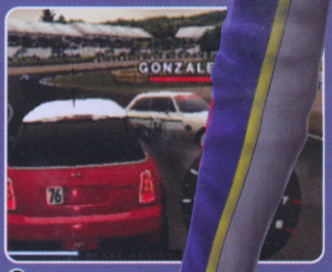
Apart from suggesting that women can successfully drive big, powerful cars, R: Racing's other innovation is the way in which other drivers react to pressure.

It's a bit like real life, in fact. Push your opponents hard and eventually they'll cave in to the stress and bugger up, leaving you free to zip past. Latas, loser!

Ducking into an opponent's slipstream is a good way to get them worried

Then weave around and listen to their panicked whines

When the bar goes red they're really rattled – tuck in close to their bumper...



...And they fold. Suck exhaust fume!

PULL UP TO THE BUMPER

While the handling initially failed to impress we did enjoy the way you can put pressure on opponents. Breathe down the neck of a car and the driver will begin to foul up his racing line, and if you stay lodged to his bumper he might make a fatal error. It's a cool way to integrate the tension real drivers feel.

It's a funny one this, and not just because it's got pert lassies driving big, powerful cars. We're a bit sceptical about its ability to claim GT or Project Gotham's chequered flag, but we're still interested to see how the storyline will work out. And it's got tits, and that's something other racing games definitely don't have. CVG

The bar fills up quicker if you swerve about like a mentalist

Come on, she's better looking than Nigel Mansell. You should see her 'tache...

The textures need a good dollop of wax and a soft cloth

CVG OPINION

Love the combination of chicks and cars but the handling and visuals are rough. R: Racing needs a thorough service to pass the CVG MOT. **Graeme**

WE LOVE

- Real-life tracks and cool motors
- Storyline adds purpose to races
- Boobs and tight racing overalls

WE HATE

- Sub-GT graphics
- Never feels like you're racing
- We'll brake for ourselves, thanks

FINAL FANTASY X-2

■ PUBLISHER
EA
■ DEVELOPER
SQUARE ENIX
■ OUT: FEB/MARCH

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

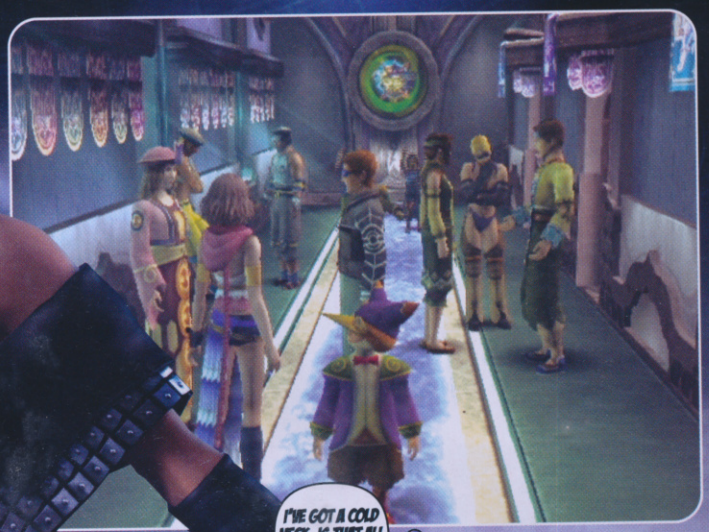
The series is into double figures, but this is the first time the classic RPG has been given a true sequel. And along the way also decides to get girl power, ditch the gloomy plots and mix it on the dancefloor. Whoo!

AVAILABLE ON

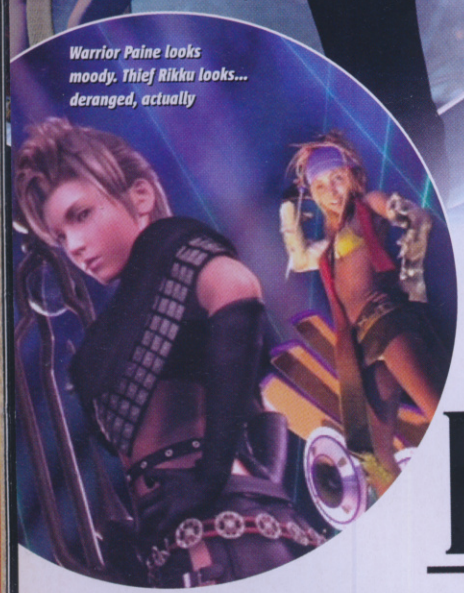
PS2

WWW.FFX2.COM

UPDATE!



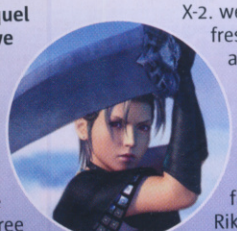
Sphere Break players: pairing skimpy bikinis and briefs with woolly scarfs. Nice



Warrior Paine looks moody. Thief Rikku looks... deranged, actually

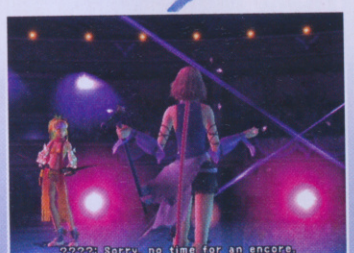
When we heard about the first-ever proper sequel to a Final Fantasy game we got excited. A bit tingly.

Then, when we heard about the non-linear story, the return to timed battles and the new skill system we got a bit of a semi on. When we saw the pictures of the three main characters, it was a full-on lob. Now we finally have our hands on an English language Final Fantasy X-2. well, let's just say we're fresh out of trousers seams at CVG towers...



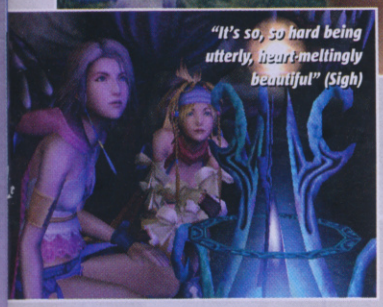
LOVELY SPHERES

After the defeat of Sin at the end of the last game, two of the babes from Final Fantasy X, Rikku and Yuna, team up with a warrior third, Paine, to join the Gullwings. The Gullwings is a



Eat that, Pop Idol. Yuna's imposter gets on the mic, but, ah, there's no time for an encore...

The Gullwings: Sphere hunters for hire, and like we say, keen on pairing lycra with wool



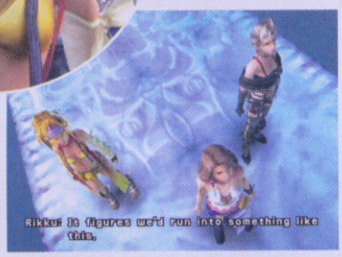
gang of sphere hunters, tracking down mystical orbs, and trying to get to them before trashy-vampirival LeBlanc. After Yuna sees an image of Tidus held prisoner the hunt for the spheres becomes a hunt for him.

This is the first time that a Final Fantasy game has ever opted to continue a story from a previous game. But is this a way of continuing a popular story or a cheap way to churn out a game? It's true that many of the character models, most of the locations and some of the monsters come straight from Final Fantasy X. But it's clear that there's also a lot new here too.

FREE WORLD

The first big change is the classic Final Fantasy story-on-rails has gone. Instead of moving from location to location because you don't have any choice, very early on in the game, the world map opens up. You can choose to hit a 'hot spot' and tackle a mission that will advance the plot. Or you can ignore those, hitting side missions to increase your characters' powers, or hey, just for shits and giggles.

Revisiting locations from the last game, you'll notice there's a lot that's been added in each, so it's worth exploring every area you can get to. Often you'll need to just to get strong enough to take on the next hot spot. Helpfully, the world map grades how tough each location is.



Careful, girls, that camera's staring down your tops. Don't expect that in a FF game, do ya?

IN THE MIX

Once you're into a mission, the classic Final Fantasy mix of

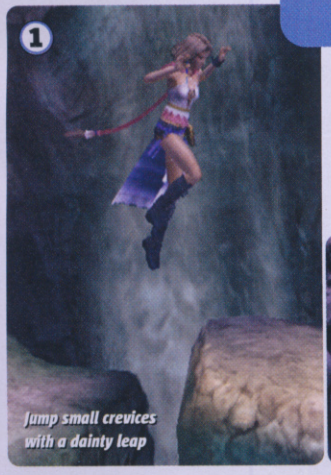
DRESSING-UP GAMES

The latest innovation in the Final Fantasy series: the Garment Grid. Change your character's figure-hugging costume mid-battle and you change their abilities. The more you wear one outfit, the more the skills tied to it improve. Just don't choose pink, it isn't your colour. You'd never guess the heroes are wimmin.

Question: what's got six legs and is scared of spiders? Yep, you guessed right

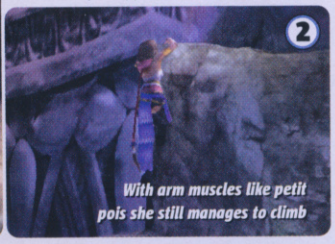
Kilika Island drinks are free. Fun and laughter there's enough for everyone

YUNA RAIDER



If Lara Croft can start talking to people and gaining abilities, and generally acting like she's in a role-playing adventure, then come on, FF wants a bit of what she's got...

So, now the characters in Final Fantasy X-2 can engage in Tomb Raider-style acrobatics. Unfortunately, these are done almost automatically by pressing the circle button as you approach a ledge. Challenging.

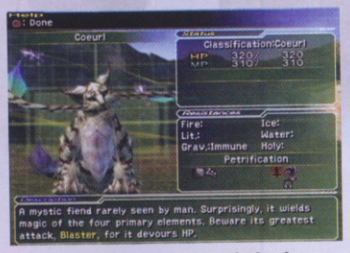


MINI-GAME FRENZY

Hurrah for one thing: the silly games are back. And as ever work as great diversions from the main missions.

But perhaps this time they're even stranger than ever. We've spared your blushes from the segment where you must massage nine parts of rival, female sphere hunter LeBlanc's body. Don't all complain at once...

Active Time Battles are back. And this time they're even faster than ever

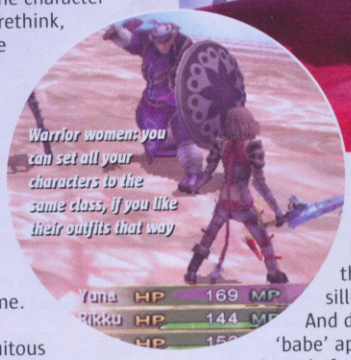


The Scan ability lets you get the lowdown on monster habits. Like, er, overgrown cats

character and inventory fiddling, fighting random encounters and engaging in unusual mini-games kicks in. It's pretty familiar. But then it wouldn't be Final Fantasy without these elements in the mix. Just like a fry-up wouldn't be the same without heartburn.

The good news is the combat's faster and more frantic than any Final Fantasy yet. The return of Active Time Battling means you've got to time attacks, rush through menus and in the case of some special attacks (like the Trigger Happy move) hammer the buttons for maximum pain.

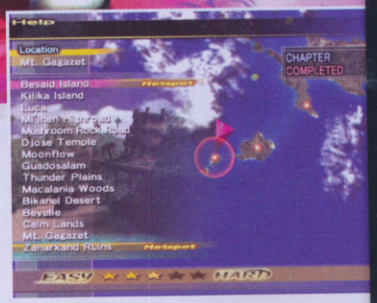
The bad news is the character class system's had a rethink, too. It's now a bizarre dressing-up system – what you wear defines your skills (see box below). And Trinny and Susannah would have a field day with this lot.



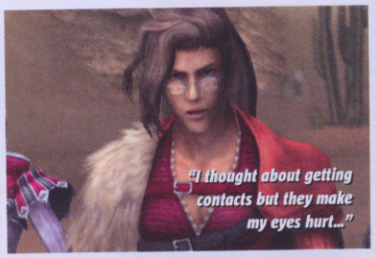
The fashions are just the start of the downside to this game. There's much girly hand-slapping, gratuitous cleavage and even the most weedy attempt at Lara Croft copying we've seen – with some distinctly pathetic climbing and leaping on show from the ladies (see box below).

Worst of all, in plot and tone, this is a lighter, sillier Final Fantasy. And despite the obvious 'babe' appeal for the mostly male fans, it doesn't quite wash. We prefer a bit more doom and gloom to our epic, world-spanning adventures, thanks.

A gorgeous-looking bird. Shame the girl from FF is standing in the way...



The new map screen: it's your world to explore in skimpy clothes. Go wherever you like



Final's angels: Paine, Yuna and Rikku

"I am LeBlanc. These are my companions. And no smirking at the back."

CVG OPINION

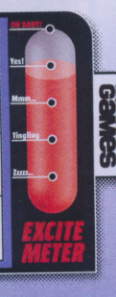
If those girls went out like that, they'd catch their death. Still, despite dubious clothing and a less linear plot this looks set to remain classic FF stuff. **Simunk**

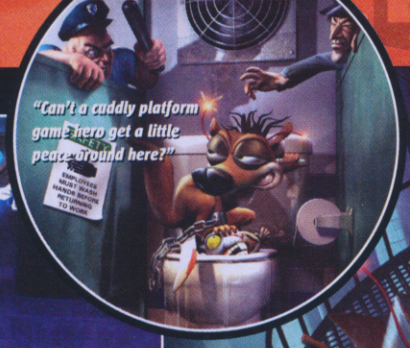
WE LOVE

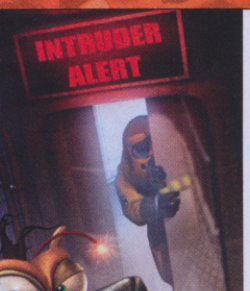
- Doing missions in any order
- The faster pace of combat
- Classic Final Fantasy adventuring

WE HATE

- Girly pop music
- Girly fashion-based system
- Girly main characters







FUNNY BUNNY

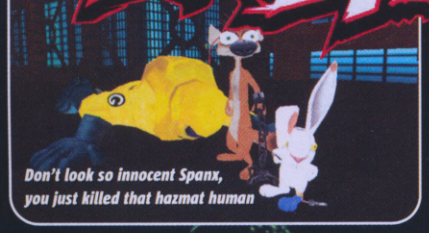
Years of being tested on by bastid scientists have given our hero Redmond some downright weird side-effects.

He's impervious to fire and toxic goo, for example, and being chucked at scientific equipment doesn't faze him at all...

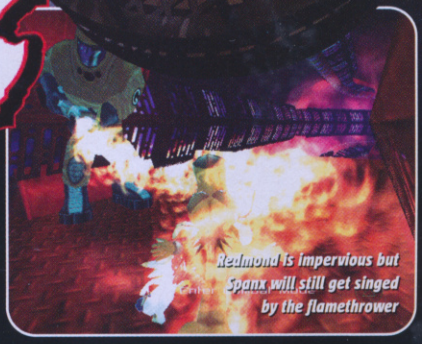
Lost a fuse? Use a bunny to complete the circuit instead

Machines transform Redmond into a ball of hellfire

Whiplash



Don't look so innocent Spanx, you just killed that hazmat human



Redmond is impervious but Spanx will still get singed by the flamethrower

PUBLISHER
EIDOS
DEVELOPER
CRYSTAL DYNAMICS
OUT: FEB

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

Save your furry buddies from animal cruelty by wrecking a giant laboratory while playing as inseparable anarchic animal duo Spanx and Redmond. Platforming meets mass destruction.

AVAILABLE ON
PS2
ALSO ON
XBOX

WWW.WHIPLASHGAME.COM

We can imagine some pretty terrible people to be permanently chained to. Like Lisa Riley (risk of being eaten) or clown-haired sleepwalking idiot Jack Osbourne (risk of being killed).

The stars of Whiplash, Spanx the weasel and Redmond the rabbit, aren't exactly a match made in heaven either, but at least they can take out the frustration of being shackled together by tearing apart an evil vivisection lab as they try to bust out.

FREAKY FUR-DAY

Sure, the fact that the two freaks are bolted together is just a gimmick to liven up the game, but at least it's put to good use – especially where you can use Redmond as a yoyo-like rodent of death and spank him about the place. You're rewarded points for smashing up as much of the lab as possible, and there are missions to rescue other four-legged victims of animal testing. Free them and they run riot too, terrorising the evil scientists. Wa-ha-ha.

It's nowt new, but it's a crack to play, and the gags are spot-on. The pace is fast and whipping gigantic humans with Redmond is dangerously good fun. The first great platformer of 2004? Check next month's review to find out.

Baddies like these with small weapons aren't too hard to beat

The duo mug and wisecrack the whole time

CVG OPINION

New platform game heroes are a rare breed, and this duo has got the sass. We hope the gameplay proves sparky enough to do them justice. **Lee**

WE LOVE
- Cool new characters
- Scaring the scientists is ace
- Tons of moves and gadgets

WE HATE
- Not too accurate when attacking
- The 'smash and grab' gameplay doesn't offer much depth

EXCITE METER

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH: REALMS OF EVERQUEST

PUBLISHER
UBISOFT
DEVELOPER
SNOWBLIND STUDIOS
OUT: MARCH

AVAILABLE ON
PS2

ONLINE GAMING
x4

WWW.UBI.COM

How geeky is too geeky? How big a beard can a man grow before he's considered beardy? Where do top-down action role-players cross the border from cool to cuss?

Norrath may well be the most traditional orcs 'n' elves adventure game we've ever seen. It's also set in the same world as the stupidly popular (or just plain stupid) EverQuest multiplayer online adventure.

Fans of EverQuest and any other American-style fantasy RPG are going to lap up all the brown hues, the level-up and spells system of distributing points, and even dressing their heroes in magic stockings and level-27 battle armour. For the less ardent RPG fan, there's a fun four-player simultaneous adventure game, plus online play for four. We wonder if it'll prove just a touch too nerdy, though.

We've all seen this sort of armour before. Why no innovation?

Those big dudes may be pink but there'll still rip you a new one

The unthinkable has indeed happened, honey – look at your outfit

WE LOVE
- Lots of shops to buy stuff
- Four-player and internet play
- Fairly interesting magic tree

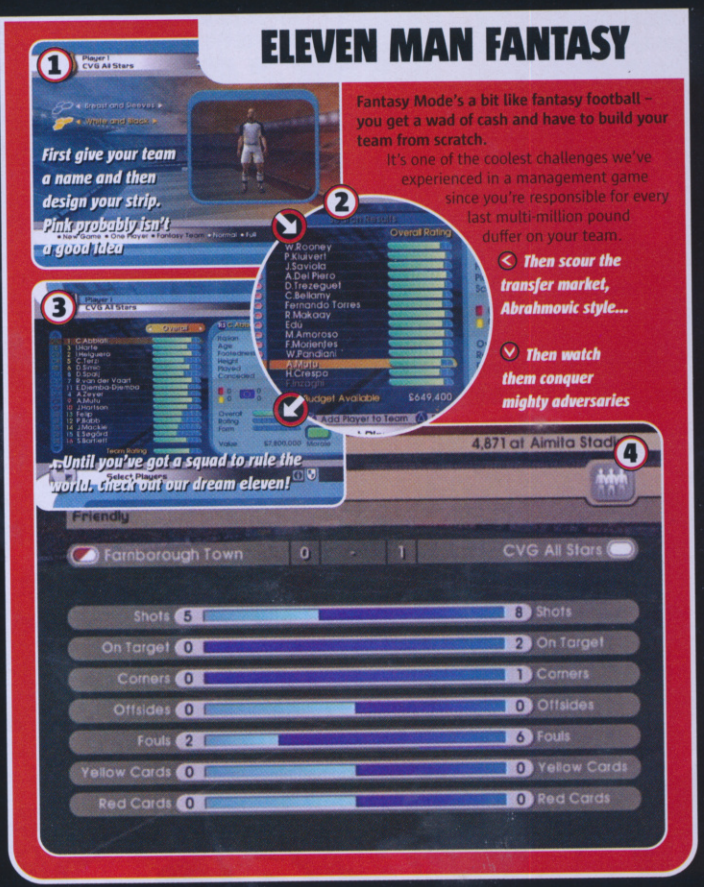
WE HATE
- It's just like any other US-style D&D adventure
- Brown, brown, more brown

EXCITE METER

The presentation is consistently attractive, which makes things a bit more exciting

LMA Manager 2004

ELEVEN MAN FANTASY



Fantasy Mode's a bit like fantasy football – you get a wad of cash and have to build your team from scratch.

It's one of the coolest challenges we've experienced in a management game since you're responsible for every last multi-million pound duffer on your team.

MATCH OF THE DAY

The match engine's no Pro Evo but does a good job of showing your tactics in action – and which players need a boot kicked at their head.

You can watch from the manager's dugout for that genuine gum-chewing, sheepskin-coat feeling

Or make like a bird and use the top-down view for a better impression of your tactical formation

You can even lock the camera on individual players to examine their movement, TV-coverage style

PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS
OUT: MARCH 2004

IN A NUTSHELL

The next instalment in the Codie's football management dynasty. Its' got 19,000 players, every pro league from five countries, a refined, fully 3D match engine and a streamlined interface. Cool.

AVAILABLE ON PS2

ALSO ON XBOX

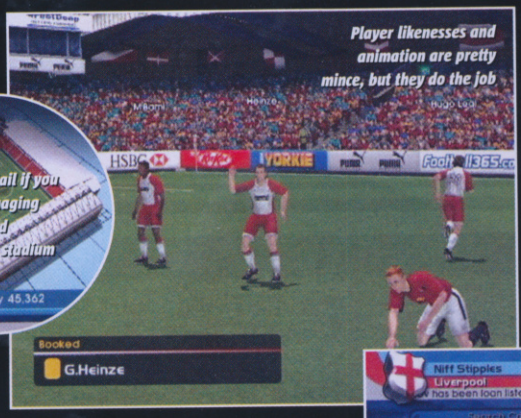
WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM.UK/LMAMANAGER2004

Shoot! SHOOT IT YOU FANNY!" "FOUL? BOLLOCKS REF!" Honestly, when we play Pro Evo 3 in the CVG office the air turns bluer than Stamford Bridge.

There's just something brilliant about shouting at football players. Footy managers do it all the time, which is why LMA Manager 2004 on Xbox lets you slap on a headset and bellow commands at your team as if you really were there on the sideline. It's a wicked idea, even if the "put it in the back of the net you overpaid, poncey-haired prick!" command doesn't work.

TRANSFER LISTINGS

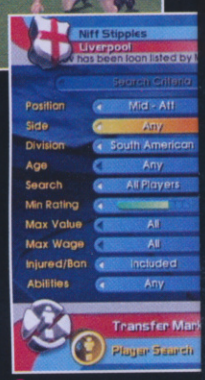
But that's just a novelty. A nice one, but a novelty all the same. LMA 2004's main enhancements are a newly updated database of players including South American leagues, the addition of individual player strategies, and enhanced 3D matches scavenged from Club Football's engine.



DREAM TEAM

You can still manage any team from the top divisions in Scotland, England, Germany, France, Italy and Spain, but our favourite new option is Fantasy mode where you get to design and name your very own team.

Not many changes, then, but it's still obvious that this is the most accomplished and satisfying console management game. Of course, it can't really compete with the top-of-the-league Champ Man 4 on PC, but at least you won't have to bugger around with stuff like enhancement packs and patches to run the bloody thing. CVG



Having South American players makes the market more interesting

CVG OPINION The Chris Coleman of footy management games –young, fresh-faced, and with an upbeat approach. A top-six finish is all but guaranteed. Graeme

WE LOVE
- Simple and good-looking
- Stats presented graphically
- Loading delays have been cut

WE HATE
- Match engine needs work
- Kits and player models are poor
- Christ, Alan Hansen's in it again!

PUBLISHER
SONY/TBC
DEVELOPER
ARGONAUT
OUT FEB/MARCH

IN A NUTSHELL

Comic ninja tale that desperately wants to play like Zelda meets Ratchet & Clank. The strong mix of mini-games, ass-whupping and ledge-jumping should certainly help it on its way.

AVAILABLE ON
PS2
ALSO ON
XBOX, GC

WWW.ININJAGAME.COM

It's been out there, in the darkness, waiting to strike. Now the moment is right... the platform game is back.

It'd pretty much been written off for dead a few years back. But a new wave of Jaks, Ratchets and Marios has created a copycat army. The shelves are stacked with cartoon characters jumping, fighting and, erm, jumping some more. Will the latest pint-sized hero deliver anything new?

The Ready Brek glow means I-Ninja has built up enough rage to go REALLY berserk

RAGE BUILDING...

I-Ninja's a back-chatting, black-clad hero who must save the world from Master O-Dor *(gah!)* after accidentally killing his sensei in a rage. These rages might appear to be some new gameplay gimmick but in reality, they're simply a power up. Kill enough bad guys and you can embark on a brief frenzy of head-chopping. Later in the game, you get different types of rage – from the unlikely healing rage, and the 'surfing in on a giant shuriken' rage, to the ultimate Iron Ninja (what the 'I' stands for) invincible rage.

When not in a ferocious temper, I-Ninja dishes out what you'd expect. Lots of combo-heavy sword and shuriken combat and a stack of wall-running, ledge jumping and mini-games. You now the deal.

The big question then: if I-Ninja doesn't deliver much in the originality stakes, does the gameplay match up to the massed opposition? On what we've seen so far, well, no. The graphics are outdated, the camera can be awkward, the combat is overly simplistic and the difficulty and frustration levels vary dramatically. Sure, there's time for tweaking, but I-Ninja's gonna have to pull off something special to get our backing. CVG

MADE MEN

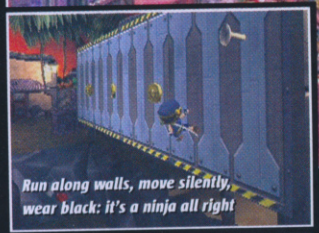
Jump on a robot's eyeball and let rip. What are we talking about? The end-of-level sections, of course.

Your Ninja is strapped to a giant metal ball. Why? Who cares, just make sure you wheel him around precarious, hazard-strewn courses. It's kinda like a futuristic Monkey Ball, really.

Strike! Bad-guy bowling – send opponents flying with your balls of steel

Thin ledge, wobbly platforms. You'll need brass balls for this bit

Get your balls out in the open air. And that's enough frickin' ball gags...



Don't let 'em grind you down: extreme sports for martial artists

Laser security, a tiny Ninja game hero in pyjamas. What could possibly go wrong?

A cute little ninja with Matrix moves? Oh pur-lease, that makes us wanna puke

CVG OPINION

This platformer's erratic difficulty may get you cursing, but if the game's niggles are fixed, this might be an okay game. But that's a big 'might be'. **Simunk**

WE LOVE

- Wise-cracking attitude
- Marble Madness-style sections
- The variety of gameplay

WE HATE

- The feeble graphics
- The incompetent camera
- The me-too cash-in feel

EXCITE METER

PUBLISHER NINTENDO
DEVELOPER NINTENDO
OUT TBC Q1
ONLINE GAMING
1-4

IN A NUTSHELL

See your Pokémon from Ruby and Sapphire do battle in GameCube-style quality. Explore new lands within the world of Pokémon. If you're clever you can capture and download rare Pokémon too.

AVAILABLE ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE

WWW.NINTENDO.COM

A Pokémon Centre as it might look on Tattooine, or in fact Pokémon Colosseum!

Fireworks night in PokéWorld tended to be a lonely and solitary affair

Don't know who this is. Could prove to be a popular character in the long run, though, eh?

POKÉMON COLOSSEUM

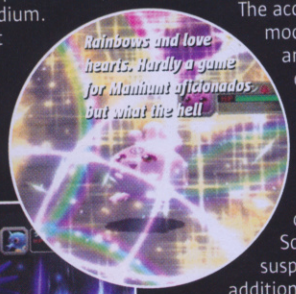
FANTASTIC BUT COULD FAIL TO MEET HIGH EXPECTATIONS

If the screens on these pages make your heart jump at the sight of a full-on Poké-RPG, well, relax. It's close, but no Rare Candy.

Pokémon Colosseum would be a dream come true if Nintendo had bolted a GBA-huge quest onto a GC-style Pokémon Stadium. You'll be impressed, but not 'Holy Cow!' out of your mind.

That said Pokémon Colosseum is a smart enough upgrade of a high GameCube standard. Fundamentally, this is Pokémon Stadium revisited, with the basic attraction of seeing your very own Ruby and Sapphire teams do battle in luxury 3D. This time, if your mates all own GC/GBA Cables, you can team up and battle two-on-two.

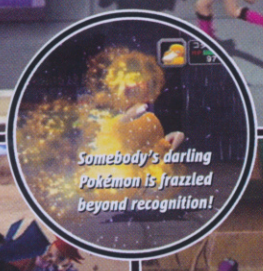
The accompanying game modes are much more ambitious than before, one in particular could be a reason to buy in itself – rare Pokémon to download onto your GBA. But we know the biggest questions relate to Scenario Mode, the suspiciously RPG-looking addition. So come with us while we do some exploring...



Rainbows and love hearts. Hardly a game for Manhunt aficionados but what the hell

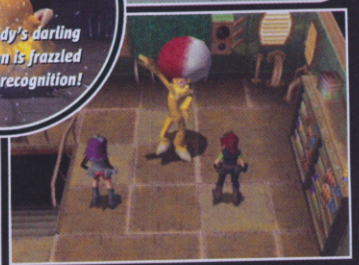
Ah hah! It seems beating up grannies isn't exclusive to GTA after all. We're shocked

Hey kid, get your paws out of those Rare Candy, I don't want poisoned Pokémon!



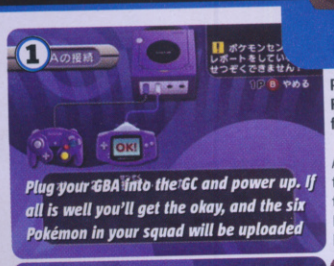
Somebody's darling Pokémon is frazzled beyond recognition!

More Star Wars influence, but you've got to admit this speeder bike hot rod is sweet!



The weirdo with the two-tone afro is the leader of the bad guys. He must be tough

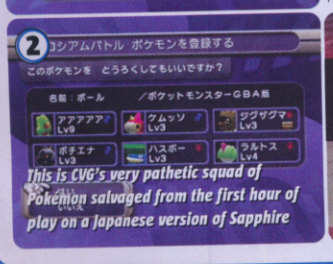
INCOMING!



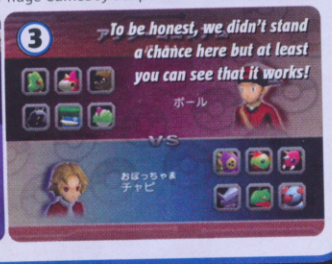
Plug your GBA into the GC and power up. If all is well you'll get the okay, and the six Pokémon in your squad will be uploaded

Pokémon that you've captured on GBA Ruby or Sapphire can be uploaded for use in Colosseum battles.

You'll need a Game Boy Advance/GameCube Cable to do this, but it's easier than it was for N64 Pokémon Stadium with that huge GameBoy adaptor...



This is CVG's very pathetic squad of Pokémon salvaged from the first hour of play on a Japanese version of Sapphire



To be honest, we didn't stand a chance here but at least you can see that it works!

EYES OFF MY SNATCH!

Scenario Mode begins with the lead character fleeing an explosive crime scene – and you rightly suspect he's at the centre of it all. He has no name, so call him what you like in the usual way of Pokémon. Anyway, this guy has escaped with a new device called the 'Snatch'! It is a highly illegal variety of Poké Ball that allows Trainers to steal a rival's Pokémon during battle. Before our hero got hold of it, a gang of we're-so-very-bad guys used to Snatch to collect Pokémon for transformation into miserable Dark Pokémon. So it becomes your mission to trace their leader and teach him what for – but not until you've built a powerful Poké Army of your own to dish out the punishment.

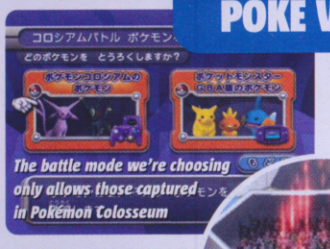
Though restricted to towns and villages – you can't wander the countryside searching for wild Pokémon – Scenario Mode has a lot in common with most

This gal is an Elite Trainer, whose Pokémon are sickly cute as you might guess

Even the most basic attacks look terrific on GameCube, look at this!

We've a great recipe for Magikarp at home if you'd like to join us for dinner...

POKÉ VENUES TO DIE FOR



The battle mode we're choosing only allows those captured in Pokémon Colosseum

When you've visited a Colosseum in Scenario Mode it becomes available in Battle Mode. We're sure you'll be impressed by the scale, detail and atmosphere in these places. With the huge crowds you feel like the centre of attention.

Laruga Tower is a futuristic battle stage

You'll be spoiled for choice, the venues are all spectacular – especially this one called 'Under' as in underground

Pyra Colosseum looks like a broken down Planetarium, could fall apart at any minute

Moody, innit! Pretty soon it'll all be lit up some of the most amazing Poke Pyrotechnics the world has ever seen!

Probably moaning that all her Pokémon have been nicked or something, the usual

Ah hah! It seems beating up grannies isn't exclusive to GTA after all. We're shocked

console RPGs and of course the many versions of Game Boy Pokémon. In each town or city there are people to talk to, who will always say the same thing unless they're important to the quest and require you to chat again for new leads. There are Pokémon Centres and Shops that serve familiar purpose, plus new establishments including a Fortune Teller.

LET'S FIGHT! (AH, BLISS!)

This being Pokémon, many of the characters you meet want to chance their arm in battle, and here's where the fun begins. In one of the first towns, a girl you meet is fascinated enough by your long blue coat to want to join forces. Somehow, this girl can detect Pokémon that are afflicted by the Dark disease. Whichever Pokémon she points out, these are the ones you must capture using the Snatch during battle.

Once Dark Pokémon are rescued they take a while to recover, and the only way to heal them is through experience in fights. The Dark aura does vanish in time however, and the recovered Pokémon can then be added to your collection for use in multiplayer battles. This could be a big So What, but the intrigue is that somewhere along the line you encounter rare Pokémon to upload into your Ruby or Sapphire GBA game. We're not 100 per cent sure, but this could mean the elusive #201 Jirachi and #202 Deoxys!

There's no doubt Colosseum will be a highly prized extension of the Pokémon universe. It allows Trainers to savour more of the terrific ideas that continue to be incorporated, all of which prove to be cool in the end. If you're a Pokémon freak, here's definitely something worth looking forward to.

CVG OPINION

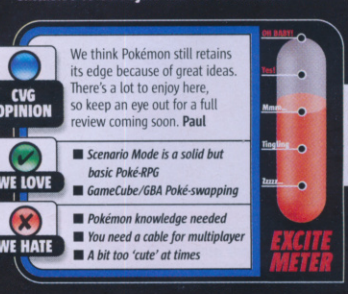
We think Pokémon still retains its edge because of great ideas. There's a lot to enjoy here, so keep an eye out for a full review coming soon. **Paul**

WE LOVE

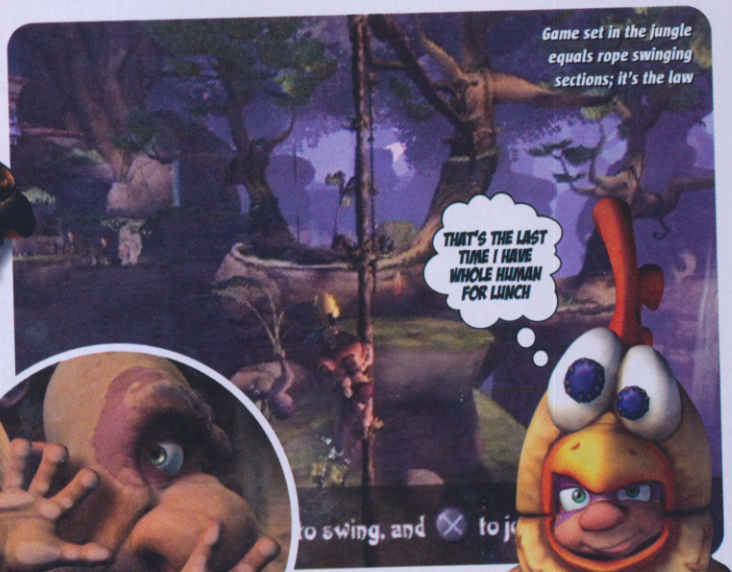
- Scenario Mode is a solid but basic Poké-RPG
- GameCube/GBA Poké-swapping

WE HATE

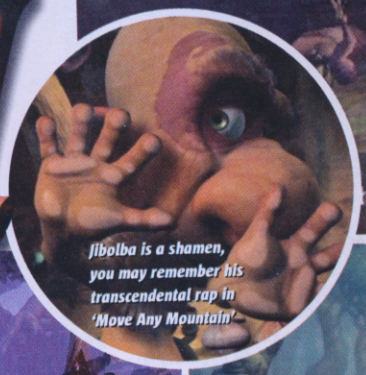
- Pokémon knowledge needed
- You need a cable for multiplayer
- A bit too 'cute' at times

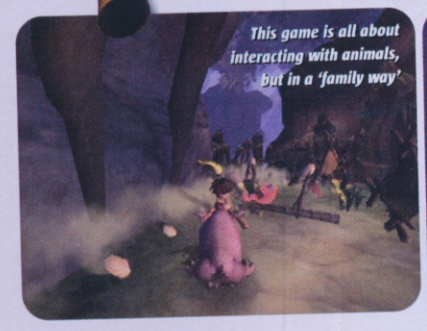


Tak and the Power of Juju

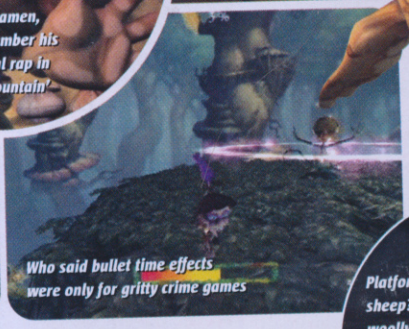


Game set in the jungle equals rope swinging sections; it's the law


Jibolba is a shamen, you may remember his transcendental rap in 'Move Any Mountain'


This game is all about interacting with animals, but in a 'family way'

These primates are only too happy to launch you into the air. Bless 'em


Who said bullet time effects were only for gritty crime games

Platformer and sheep? It's a woolly jumper!

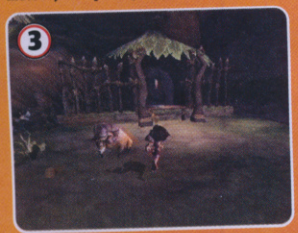
ANIMAL MAGIC

Not all animals are there for you to exploit. Some are all about blocking your progress.

One such encounter sees Tak face a grumpy ram who charges the poor fella whenever he gets close. After taking an almighty kicking the penny finally drops...

Every time you get close to the ram, it, er, rams you

But everyone knows rams love melons, so try tempting it



Dumb animal is distracted, so now you can sneak past

- PUBLISHER: THQ
- DEVELOPER: AVALANCHE STUDIOS
- OUT: MARCH 2004

ONLINE GAMING

IN A NUTSHELL

A rollicking platform adventure where unlikely hero Tak sets out into the jungle in search of magical artifacts to save his people. Instead he finds comedy creatures, muchos tricky platforming and quirky puzzles.

AVAILABLE ON

PS2

ALSO ON GBA, CUBE

WWW.TAKGAME.COM

A weird old thing happened when we watched Tak and the Power of JuJu's intro movie. We laughed properly.

Not a half-hearted giggle, but a full-on, belly rocking, soak-the-screen-with-spit guffaw. It was a combination of seeing a Gandhi-like dude saying funny things and watching a sheep lick his foot. On their own neither of these things are particularly funny, but together they are comedy dynamite. Well, in our messed-up minds...

Tak And The Power Of Juju is a platform game that borrows from smash titles like Mario Sunshine. It takes place in a steamy, vibrant jungle setting, and follows the adventures of a pudding bowl haired hero called Tak who sets off to find magical artifacts capable of reversing a spell that has turned his tribe into sheep. Yes, sheep.

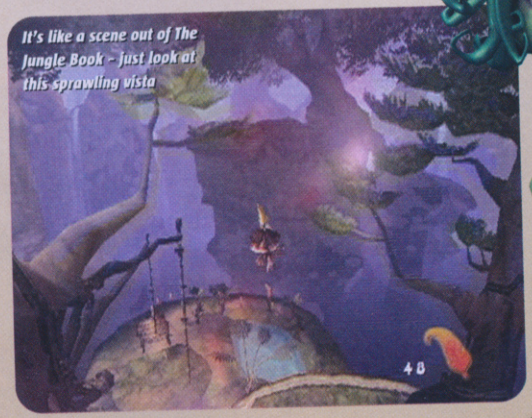
MONKEY PUNCHER

On paper this sounds painfully predictable, but what looks certain to lift this above being just another copycat game is how your progress is tied to manipulating the jungle and its kooky residents. Take the orang-utans; they loiter beneath coconut trees, as you would expect of a stinky and hungry primate. But if you approach one, it'll bend back the tree trunk so you can stand on top, ready to be catapulted to previously unreachable areas.

We like the variety of ways you can move about

In practice, every puzzle and challenge involves thinking about how you can get a dumb animal to help you, and this is what makes the game entertaining and intriguing.

From the two-level demo we played, it's obvious a lot of effort has been put into making the characters funny and engaging, and in particular, the cutscenes are a total laugh. Who can keep a straight face while a brave warrior is reduced to a quivering wreck by a bout of noisy diarrhoea? Or how about a chicken suit that gives Tak the power of flight and explosive eggs. This is all good stuff and enough to whet our appetite for more laughs when we get the review version. Bring it on! CVG


It's like a scene out of The Jungle Book - just look at this sprawling vista

CVG OPINION

Plenty of originality and detail here, and if the gags and puzzles remain consistently good, this'll be cool, even if it doesn't offer anything new. **Rich**

WE LOVE

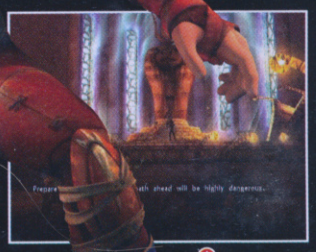
- The humour is spot on
- Puzzles are original
- The game looks lush

WE HATE

- There are camera issues
- Controls are a bit clunky
- Might look too kiddie for some

GAMES

'Walk like an Egyptian'. Arf



The visual style and storytelling is lush and polished - just the way we like it!

SPHINX
AND THE SHADOW OF SET

PUBLISHER THQ
DEVELOPER EUROCOM
OUT FEB 2004

IN A NUTSHELL

Say hello to an epic action/adventure set in a fantasy world styled on ancient Egypt. You control two players, alternating between solving elemental puzzles and dishing out a bit of Ra-busting violence. Nice

AVAILABLE ON XBOX

ALSO ON CUBE, PS2

WWW.THQ.COM/SPHINX

UPDATE!

A while back we wafted Sphinx's Eastern promise under your nostrils. Now the game is nearly ready for us Euro gamers to play, and we can reveal yet more tantalising nuggets of its gameplay, which point to a real beauty of a game set to offer mind-warping puzzles, epic exploration and wild combat.

In the game you control two heroes: Sphinx and Mummy. Around 60 per cent of the game is played as the bubble-butted Sphinx, and from our playtest it seems that these bits are much more action-led than Mummy's more puzzly sections.

The mummy is the better of the two characters, no contest

The mummy's levels are more head-scratchy, or bandage-scratchy

Big nails and shifty eyes - we're guessing this hombre is a baddy

IMMORTALITY RULEZ OK!

Despite getting less than half of the limelight, it's quickly clear that Mummy is the coolest of the characters, mainly because he's funny looking and already dead (and therefore incapable of being killed). And it's this element that underpins his puzzle solving sections, of which there are many.

Since the bandaged skellington is immortal and impervious to harm, he can be made paper-thin, set on fire, conduct electricity, given wings and split into three, and each of these abilities comes into play to solve the game's crafty conundrums. In one puzzle Mummy has to make himself thin to sneak between a stone wall to collect a crucial artifact, and in another he has to set himself on fire to burn through a wooden gate. Another puzzle involves manoeuvring three versions of Mummy towards a series of switches.

Comparisons to platform games don't do this justice as it feels a lot more like a Zelda adventure than, say, Rayman. Thank the dark Egyptian gods for that! CVG

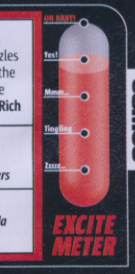
If Disney ran ancient Egypt, and who's to say they didn't, this is what it would have looked like

CVG OPINION

Class and production values help this stand out. The puzzles are tough and original and the game world – full of intrigue and action – looks like fun. **Rich**

WE LOVE
- Superb graphics
- Great gameplay variety
- Really memorable characters

WE HATE
- Might be quite slow paced
- Perhaps too much like Zelda
- A lot of wandering around



GAMES

MX UNLEASHED

PUBLISHER THQ
DEVELOPER RAINBOW STUDIOS
OUT FEBRUARY 2004

AVAILABLE ON XBOX PS2

ONLINE GAMING

HTTP://WWW.THQ.COM/GAMES/MINISITEDEFAULT.ASP?UPC=46045

Like Aston Villa, moto-X games are perennially good, but never stray into the super-league territory.

Maybe it's because most of what you see when you play is brown mud – which is hardly the sexiest of colours.

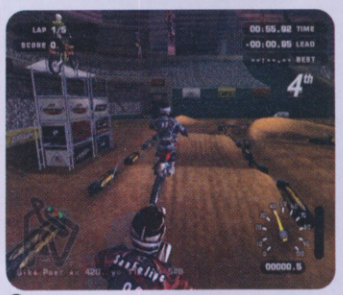
But MX is on the way back, and with it comes a series of minor innovations that could make it the best yet. There are 40 new courses, split over challenge-based freestyle and straight racing supercross riding with 23 of the sport's finest riders. All well and good.

What's new is the clutch feature that allows you to keep the revs up while whipping out the power to the rear wheel. This means you can approach a tight turn, engage the clutch and drop it on the way out, giving you a surge of race-winning power. Another new feature is the create-a-rider option, with a whole load of bikes and gear to mix and match.

With the ability to shift your rider's body weight about too, this feels very much like a simulation racer, which should fill a niche rather nicely.

Like MX games of old, it's still big jumps, and a hard rocking soundtrack

It's hard to make mud look sexy, even if it's caked on Kate Moss's pert backside



Quite how your competitors manage to get so high is beyond us, but they do. Arse

WE LOVE
- The feel is very realistic
- A ton of race challenges
- Could be fun online

WE HATE
- Cruddy soundtrack
- Looks a bit drab
- Very easy to crash

GAMES

Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX® 3

PUBLISHER
UBISOFT
DEVELOPER
UBISOFT
OUT MARCH

IN A NUTSHELL

We haven't seen a PlayStation version of Xbox's high-scoring squad-based tactical shooter since PSone. This PS2 take is armed with a bunch of new stuff, making for a more rounded offline package.

AVAILABLE ON
PS2

ALSO ON
XBOX

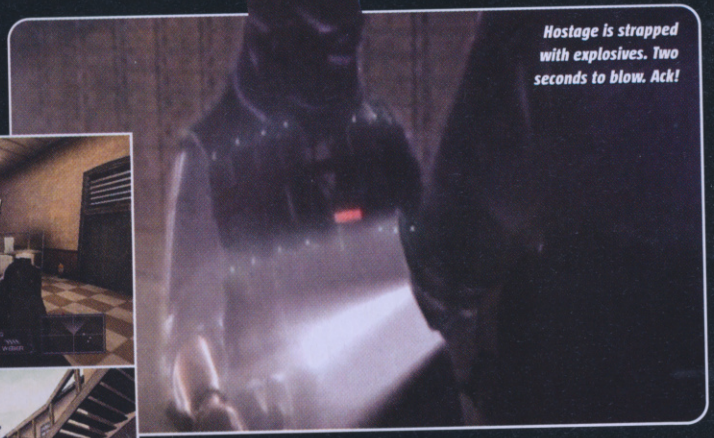
WWW.UBISOFT.COM

You've just parachuted into Iraq and discovered Saddam and Bush in a stinky hole, the ex-dictator playing Peter Pan to the President's Wendy. Most shocking of all, they're covered in Marmite. It's practically a war crime. You've GOT to tell someone or you'll strain your sphincter holding that secret in – which is how we've felt for the last few months, busting to tell you about Rainbow Six 3 on PS2, but sworn to keep shtum.

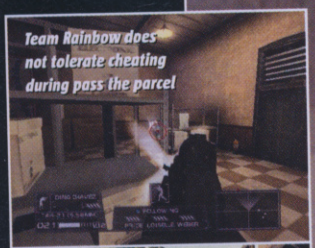
It's been difficult for blabbermouths like us, which is one of the reasons why Ding Chavez is again the silent-stepping, hush-hush hero of Ubi Soft's counter-terrorist tactical shooter, and not CVG. Shame really, as we're already wearing so much urban camo clothing it takes upwards of ten minutes to find whoever's sitting at the next desk.

Added to all the class Xbox version's levels is a new one set in Trieste, Italy, and a new online map called Prison. Yes, online – R63 plans to take on the likes of SOCOM 2, Ubisoft's own Ghost Recon Jungle Storm and Syphon Filter Omega Strain on their own stomping grounds. And if that weren't enough, check out the brand-new split-screen mode.

From what we've seen so far Ubisoft's making a decent fist of it – the reworked opening cutscene alone is one of the best we've seen on PS2. Gameplay wise, you know the score with Rainbow Six 3 by now – tool up with whatever weapons you think fit the job then kick ass however you see fit. Go gung-ho yourself, make your three-man squad do the dirty work, or mix it up some. Check out how this level in Croatia varies depending on how you play it...



Hostage is strapped with explosives. Two seconds to blow. Ack!



Team Rainbow does not tolerate cheating during pass the parcel

That wooden fire escape's about as useful as a chocolate fireguard

CUT! THAT'S A WRAP

The good news is they've extended the Xbox's eye-popping opening cutscene so we can revel in it's trouser-arousing visual goodness and cinematic direction for even longer.

LONE WOLF

Nothing wrong with going it alone – if you're hard enough. The sweatiest, most hardcore players of PC Rainbow Six games already like nothing more than sitting on their Thomas The Tank Engine duvet covers in their skanky bedsits swapping war stories about how they completed the scariest levels without any of their squad. Blindfolded.

Fact is, boasting aside, it's pretty useful to be able to finish levels without any help. Especially as squad members never actually die – they're 'incapacitated', which in posh places means they're having a wazz. Here, it means they're having an extended lie-down waiting for the medics to arrive, and they'll rejoin you next mission. No need to restart – feel free to finish the level without them. Thank bollocks for that.

YOU MY BITCHES

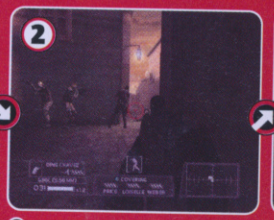
Back-seat generals last longest. Fact. Why put your neck on the line when some other sucker can take the bullets for you? And as this Dubrovnik mission shows, it's possible to finish at least some levels without personally firing a single shot.

You'll need to zoom in a lot to pick out precise locations and targets for your squad, and you can then either order them in manually with two button presses, or use voice comms over the PS2 headset, which works pretty well and makes life even easier.

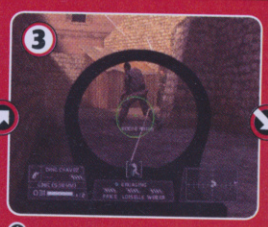
The build we played still had a few squad AI glitches that needed clearing up, but your team are efficient killers, even choosing the right equipment at the start of the mission, depending on what your choose for yourself. So they'll have gas masks if you chose CS gas grenades, or silenced weapons if that's what you prefer.

In two-player you don't get to see the weapons waving about on-screen

Keep a little distance from them so they take the crossfire



Once in place, they take up good defensive positions

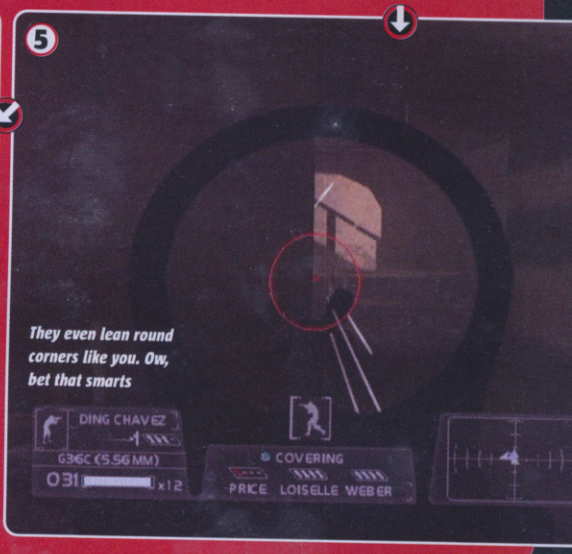


But they're not immortal. Call 'Regroup' if it gets too hot

Try to look away if you order them to Flash and Clear rooms

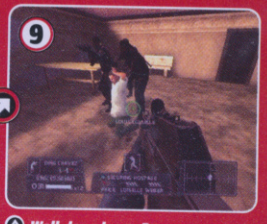
My eyes! Avoid frag grenades when using thermal vision...

The squad orders rosette is a piece of pish to use



They even lean round corners like you. Ow, bet that smarts

...or near hostages. A flashbang is the ideal calling card here

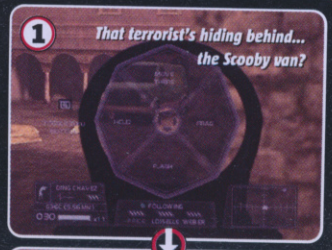


Well done boys. Damn gun was jammed, honest

EXTREME HARM-ONY

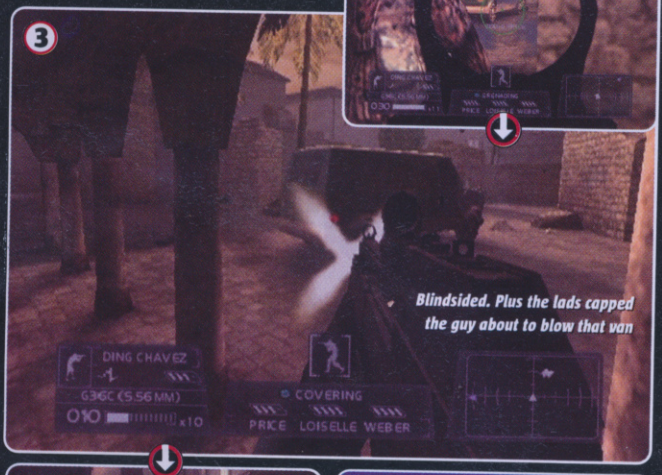
Truth is, R63 is best played combining the kill skills of a lone soldier with the options provided by having a squad to draw fire or act as a diversion while you attack from elsewhere. They're also an extension of you, and may be carrying equipment that you don't, like grenades for clearing rooms.

For the more complex tactical manoeuvres, the headset works best, particularly if precision timing is crucial – like ordering your squad to Breach and Clear one door while you come in another, taking the terrorists by the tradesman's entrance.

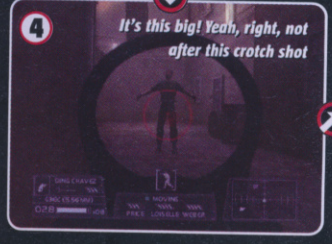


That terrorist's hiding behind... the Scooby van?

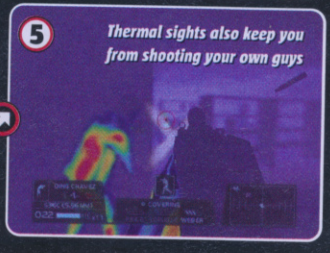
Flush him out with a grenade and use the van for cover...



Blindsided. Plus the lads capped the guy about to blow that van

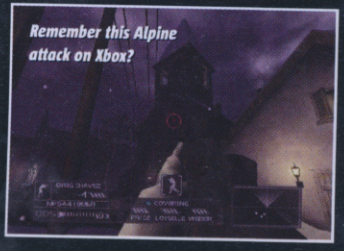


It's this big! Yeah, right, not after this crotch shot



Thermal sights also keep you from shooting your own guys

Give your teammates covering fire

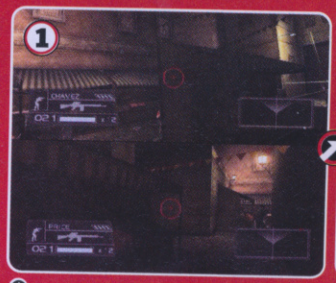


Remember this Alpine attack on Xbox?

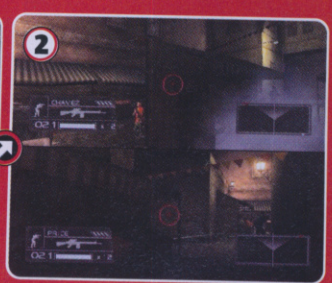
SPLIT SCREAM

If the Xbox version had any problems, it was that you only got the most from it on Xbox Live. PS2 makes up for this with a split-screen mode that lets you play the entire single-player campaign with a mate offline, which unlocks a special Terrorist Hunt mode too.

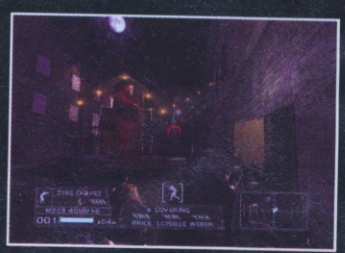
The on-screen weapons are gone to help PS2 cope with the workload of two players. But it's a nice addition, on top of ten regular online multiplayer maps, eight-player games and modes including Sharpshooter, Team Deathmatch and regular Deathmatch. Shame it doesn't let you play co-op online as well – a feature that WAS in the Xbox version.



Players with skills apparently use 'bunnyhop' or 'oversight' techniques



We couldn't find any button for hopping. Must've been an... oversight. Sorry



That's a statue – the Grim Reaper's not a foe

CVG OPINION

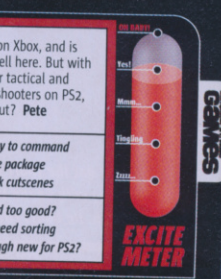
R63 was ace on Xbox, and is shaping up well here. But with so many other tactical and squad-based shooters on PS2, will it stand out? **Pete**

WE LOVE

- Squad is easy to command
- Better offline package
- Properly wick cutscenes

WE HATE

- Is your squad too good?
- AI wobbles need sorting
- Is there enough new for PS2?



Arc

TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS™

- PUBLISHER: SONY
- DEVELOPER: CATTLE CALL
- OUT: FEBRUARY

ONLINE GAMING

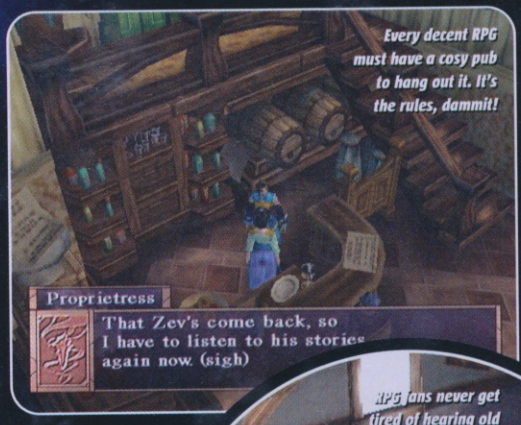
IN A NUTSHELL

Old-school RPG with an epic storyline, featuring two brothers separated at birth. It might seem old-fashioned at first, but there's solid gameplay lurking beneath the deceptively quaint exterior.

AVAILABLE ON PS2

WWW.PLAYSTATION.COM

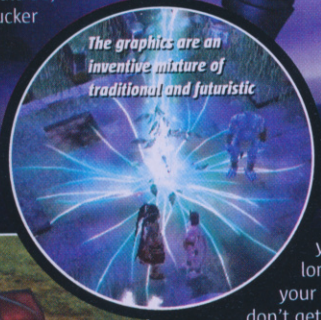
At times your heroes team up for double damage mayhem



Sibling rivalry. It's a familiar tale. One brother, Kharg, raised in a loving home with all the traditional comforts: a doting mother, food on the table, clean undies every morning.

The other, Darc, raised in a sulphuric hell-hole by a hideous witch who beats him and throttles him with an electrified choke-collar. Guess which one grew up angry and twisted?

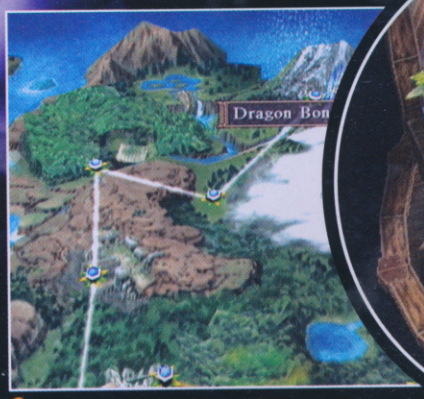
Intrigued? You should be, especially if you're a sucker for traditional RPGs such as Dark Chronicle or Wild Arms 3. If the idea of wandering around quaint hamlets chatting to cheery apple-cheeked locals, smiling at pets and buying healing potions at the local inn fills you with misty-eyed longing, Arc is right up your cobbled street. But don't get too comfortable. Arc is shaping up to be much more than magic-by-numbers sword and sorcery fare with noble heroes and pantomime villains.


The graphics are an inventive mixture of traditional and futuristic

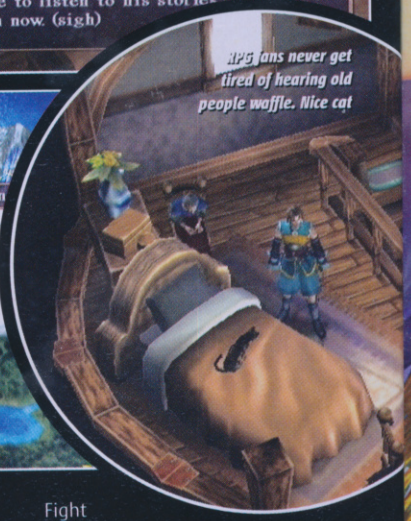
Somehow we can't get to grips with having to smite cute toadstools, demonic or not

KILLER SQUIRRELS

Anyone who's played Final Fantasy, Zelda or Golden Sun will be familiar with the basic structure of Arc.



Use the sword icon to move swiftly and effortlessly across the world map

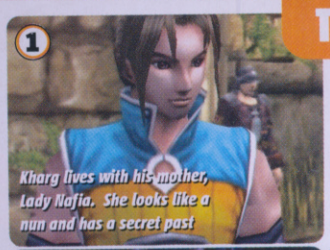


Don't be scared! This Status screen is about as complicated and stat-laden as Arc gets

Collect shiny Spirit Stones to unleash each character's special attacks in battle

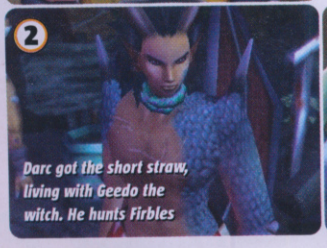
Fight turn-based battles, using swords, bows and magical attacks powered by Spirit Stones. Earn Experience points by foes to make your merry band big and strong. Control up to 14 playable characters along the way, including beastly bros Darc and Kharg. Nothing you haven't done many times before, but that doesn't stop it being heaps of fun. Although the plot of the game revolves around the typical struggle between humans and monsters (called Deimos) many of the minor skirmishes involve crazy woodland creatures gone bad, such as killer squirrels and homicidal snails. A bizarre twist!

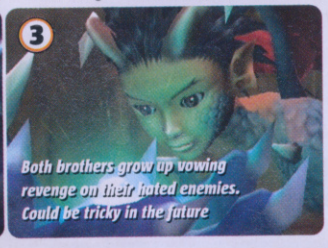
TALE OF TWO CITIES


1 Kharg lives with his mother, Lady Nafia. She looks like a nun and has a secret past

One of the best aspects of Arc: Twilight of the Spirits is the way in which the story splits into two distinctive sections.

For several hours you merrily explore Kharg's sunny (but troubled) homeland of Yewbell, then suddenly the mood shifts dramatically as you're plunged into Darc's wretched universe. You know they're bound to come together eventually, but how?


2 Darc got the short straw, living with Geedo the witch. He hunts Firbles


3 Both brothers grow up vowing revenge on their hated enemies. Could be tricky in the future

CVG OPINION

Refreshingly simple role-player that's stripped bare of some of the more complicated RPG paraphernalia, yet still strangely compelling. **Maura**

WE LOVE

- Traditional RPG style gameplay
- Lots of witty banter
- Imaginative characters

WE HATE

- Not enough cutscenes are great,
- Extremely linear gameplay
- Enemies too easy to defeat

computer and video
games
FINAL FANTASY X-2

TRANSFORMERS
ARMADA

computer and video
games
TRANSFORMERS ARMADA

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GAMES
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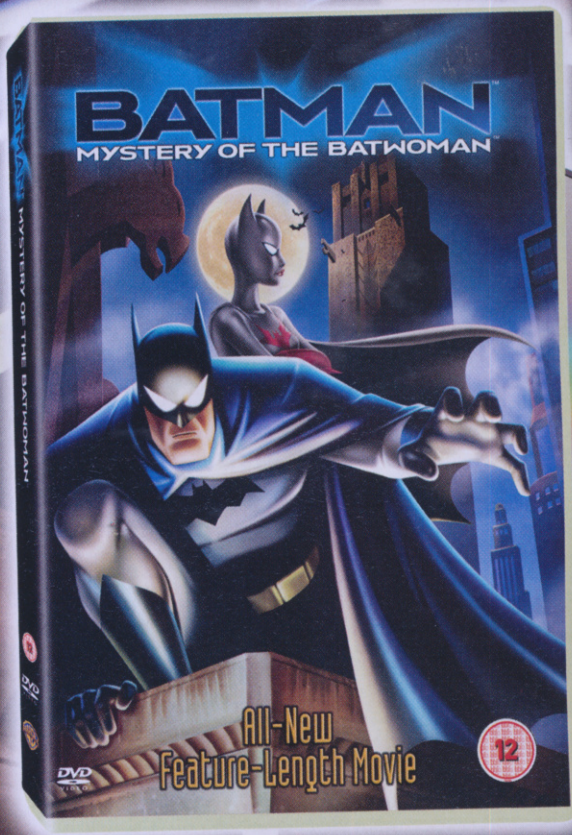
computer and video
GAMES

BATMAN™
MYSTERY OF THE BATWOMAN

Out on DVD VIDEO for the 1st time!



Catch it on DVD & Video from 26th January

Available at ASDA

The popular Batman Animated Series will be available on DVD from the summer.

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GET THE MOST OUT OF THE GAMES YOU'VE GOT

EXTENDED PLAY

Our tips slave Barny Zoeller has had his hands amputated and replaced with surgically grafted joypads. He can't go wee-wee, but he can work faster on hints and cheats. Result!

MARIO KART DOUBLE DASH!!

ALL CUP TOUR
Beat Special Cup 150cc

ALTERNATIVE START SCREEN
Beat All Cup Tour in Mirror mode

BARREL TRAIN
Beat Star Cup 150cc

BLOOM COACH
Beat Flower Cup 150cc

BOO PIPES
Beat Special Cup Mirror mode

BULLET BLASTER
Beat Special Cup 50cc

GREEN FIRE
Beat Mushroom Cup 50cc

KING BOO, PETEY PIRANHA & KART
Beat Star Cup in Mirror mode

LUIGI'S MANSION ARENA
Beat Mushroom Cup 150cc

MIRROR MODE
Beat All Cup Tour 150cc

PARA WING
Beat Star Cup 50cc

PARADE KART
Beat All Cup Tour in Mirror mode

RATTLE BUGGY
Beat Mushroom Cup 100cc

SPECIAL CUP
Beat Star Cup 100cc

TILT-A-KART ARENA
Beat Flower Cup in Mirror mode

TOAD, TOADETTE, TOAD KART
Beat Special Cup in Mirror mode

TOADETTE KART
Beat Mushroom Cup in Mirror mode

TURBO BIRDO
Beat Flower Cup 150cc

WALUIGI RACER
Beat Flower Cup 100cc

TRUE CRIME STREETS OF LA

CHANGE NICK'S APPEARANCE
Make a licence plate using the following names to make Nick appear as that character. Highlight OK before you begin, and hold down both shoulder triggers (L1+R1 on PS2) when confirming name entry.

CHARACTER	NAME
Chief	B1G1
Rosie	ROSA
Rosie in lingerie	HURT_M3
Cop	FUZZ
Police officer	FATT
SWAT officer	5WAT
Commando	M1K3
Female worker	HARA
Female punk	B00B
Male punk	MNKY
Gangster	TFAN
Boxer	BRUZ
Gambler	MRFU
Butcher	PHAM
Biker	HAWG
S&M donkey	JASS
Tattooed woman	TATS
Pimp	P1MP
Tramp	B00Z
Dead Body	J1MM

UNLOCK IMPOUNDED CARS
Press Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, X

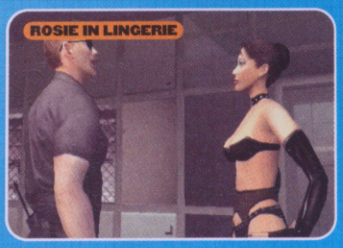
PLAY AS SNOOP DOGG
R1 ,L1, Up, Right, Left, Down, L3, R3, X, Square, Circle, Triangle

ALL DRIVING SKILLS
Press Left, Right, Left, Right, X in the Pause menu

ALL FIGHTING SKILLS
Press Up, Down, Up, Down, X in the Pause menu

ALL GUNPLAY SKILLS
Press Right, Left, Right, Left, X in the Pause menu

BIGGER CAR
Get in a car and press Down, Down, Down, X in the Pause menu



TRUE CRIME STREETS OF LA

SHOW NICK'S LOCATION
Input X, Y, Y at the map screen

UNLOCK IMPOUNDED CARS
Press Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, A at the map screen

ALL DRIVING SKILLS
Press Left, Right, Left, Right, A in the Pause menu

ALL FIGHTING SKILLS
Press Up, Down, Up, Down, A in the Pause menu

ALL GUNPLAY SKILLS
Press Right, Left, Right, Left, A in the Pause menu

BIGGER CAR
Get in a car and press Down, Down, Down, A in the Pause menu

SHOW LOCATION
Press A, X, B, Y in the Pause menu

TRUE CRIME STREETS OF LA

SPEED INCREASE
Press Up, Up, Up, A in the map screen

PLAY AS SNOOP DOGG
Press Right trigger, left trigger, Up, Right, Left, Down, Left stick down, Right stick down, A, X in the map screen

UNLOCK STATS, WEAPONS, CARS AND MOVES
Press Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, A in the map screen

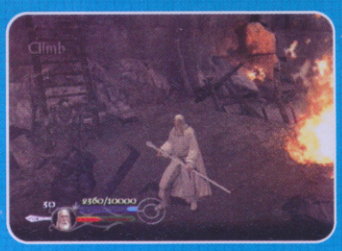
ALL DRIVING SKILLS
Press Left, Right, Left, Right, A in the Pause menu

ALL FIGHTING SKILLS
Press Up, Down, Up, Down, A in the Pause menu

ALL GUNPLAY SKILLS
Press Right, Left, Right, Left, A in the Pause menu

BIGGER CAR
Get in a car and press Down, Down, Down, A in the Pause menu

SHOW LOCATION
Press A,B, X, Y in the Pause menu



THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Beat the last scene in the game to unlock the codes. To use them start a mission and press Esc. And hold down CTRL, Left SHIFT and Left ALT then tap in a number on the numeric keypad on your keyboard.

EFFECT	CODE
Upgrades	8967
Always devastating	6869
Infinite missiles	7795
Invincible	7578
Perfect mode	5967
Full health	7755
Target indicator	9587

YOUR BEST TIPS

If you've got a star quality tip that you want to share or if you'd like our resident expert Barny to answer a query, send it into us at:

CVGTIPS@DENNIS.CO.UK

EXTENDED PLAY TIPS
COMPUTER AND VIDEOGAMES,
DENNIS PUBLISHING,
9 DALLINGTON STREET
LONDON EC1V 0BQ

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

During game play press Start to pause then hold down R and L then input the following codes. These codes only work after you have finished the game.

EFFECT	CODE
Up, B, Y, A	Aragorn 1000 Exp
Down, Y, Up, Down	Frodo 1000 Exp
X, Y, Up, Down	Gandalf 1000 Exp
X, X, Y, A	Gimli 1000 Exp
A, Y, Up, A	Legolas 1000 Exp
Y, A, Down, A	Sam 1000 Exp
X, Down, Y, A	All perfects
Up, Down, Y, B	All upgrades
Y, Up, Y, Down	Always devastating
B, B, Down, X	Infinite missiles
B, X, B, Up	Invincible
X, Down, Y, A	Perfect mode
B, B, X, X	Health
Down, X, Up, B	Target indicator mode

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

During game play press Start to pause then hold down R and L then input the following

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B, Y, Up, Down	Gandalf 1000 Exp
B, B, Y, A	Gimli 1000 Exp
A, Y, Up, A	Legolas 1000 Exp
Y, A, Down, A	Sam 1000 Exp
Up, Down, Y, X	All upgrades
Y, Up, Y, Down	Always devastating
X, X, Down , B	Infinite missiles
X, B, X, Up	Invincible
B, Down, Y, A	Perfect mode
X, X, B, B	Health
Down, B, Up, X	Target indicator mode

FINAL FANTASY TACTICS

You need to complete the game once before you can unlock the following.

BABUS
Finish the Left Behind mission then enter a town and beat the With Babus mission

CID
Beat all 300 missions

EZEL
Choose Gosip in the Card Shop then beat the Reconciliation mission

RITZ
Beat the Mortal Snow mission

SHARA
Beat a Maiden's Cry mission then enter a town

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

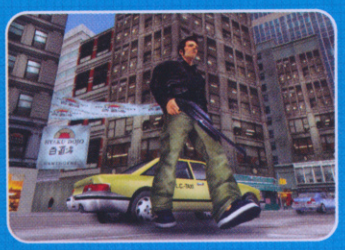
TUBE REAVER
When playing as Kain pause the game and press Up, Down, Left, Right, R, L, Y, Down, B

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

When playing as Kain pause the game and press Up, Down, Left, Right, R2, L2, Triangle, Down, and Circle

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3

GOD MODE
Tap in Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right B, A during game play.



GRAND THEFT AUTO DOUBLE PACK

GTAIII
Enter the following during gameplay. Note that some of the codes cannot be undone once entered so use them at your own risk.

Weapons
Black, Black, L, Black, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
Armor
Black, Black, L, White, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
Health
Black, Black, L, R, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
Change clothes
Right, Down, Left, Up, L, White, Up, Left, Down, Right
Blow up car
White, Black, L, R, White, Black, Y, X, B, Y, White, L
Tank
B, B, B, B, B, B, R, White, L, Y, B, Y
Good handling
R, L, Black, L, Left, R, R, Y
Invisible cars
L, L, X, Black, Y, L, Y
Blood and gore
X, L, B, Down, L, R, Y, Right, L, A
Up wanted level
Black, Black, L, Black, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right
Down wanted level
Black, Black, L, Black, Up, Down, Up, Down, Up, Down
Money
Black, Black, L, L, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up
Mad pedestrians
Black, R, Y, A, White, L, Up, Down
Pedestrians hate you
Down, Up, Left, Up, A, R, Black, L, White
Pedestrians fight each other
Down, Up, Left, Up, A, R, Black, White, L
Faster time
B, B, B, X, X, X, X, X, L, Y, B, Y
Slow mode
Y, Up, Right, Down, X, R, Black
Fast mode
Y, Up, Right, Down, X, L, White
Clear weather
L, White, R, Black, Black, R, White, Y

REALLY STUCK?

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope:

THE COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES TIPS HELPLINE
0906 466 4659

Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantees to find you an answer within 24 hours.
Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

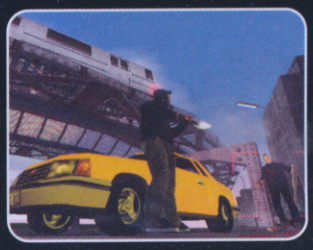
BARNY'S PROBLEM CORNER

Are all the hot girls avoiding you because you're just too crap at games? Allow love god Barny to sort out all your problems...

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

Q. How do you unlock the cars that are covered up in the showroom?
Dan via email

A. *To unlock these cars you need to finish Kudos World Series. For the Delfino you need at least a Steel medal in every race, for the Ferrari 250 GTO you need at least a Bronze medal in every race, for the Porsche 911 GT1 you need at least a Silver in every race, for the Mercedes CLK-GTR you need at least a Gold and for the TVR Cerbera Speed 12 you need to get a Platinum medal in every race. If you get all Platinum this unlocks all the cars below it, if you get all Silver this unlocks the cars below it so you don't need to complete the game again on lower settings to get everything.*



GRAND THEFT AUTO III

Q. I'm stuck on the mission in GTAIII called Kingdom Come. I've finished it with a cheat but I want to complete the game properly and this is the only one I can't do.

A. *Make sure you have full health and armour before starting the mission. After the cutscene get out of the vehicle and run for the opening and van in front of you. Go past the van and into the street, if you're lucky you'll get hit once. Blow up the van with a grenade then move around to each entrance and destroy all the other vans. Look for a stairway that leads to a platform. You can easily kill all the remaining people from here using an Uzi.*

FINAL FANTASY X

Q. In FFX how are you meant to beat Yunalesca near the end. It does me in every time.
Luigi's mother via email

A. *Make sure all your Aeons are fully charged up before starting. The boss has three stages. The first stage should be easy enough just don't use any Aeons on it. Keep your team healthy and use normal attacks to defeat the first bit. When the second part pops up summon Shiva and use its overdrive. You can make Shiva heal herself by casting Blizzara on herself. Once Shiva dies use normal attacks. Make sure you use defensive magic as well as normal attacks. If Yunalesca uses her absorb attack heal the injured party member immediately. However if Yunalesca infects someone with Zombie then healing items will kill them. When Yunalesca changes to her third form you should unleash all of your Aeons and use their Overdrives. Allow Yunalesca to make at least one party member Zombie. This is in case she uses her Megadeath move that will instantly kill all non-zombie members. After you're Aeons die you'll probably need two characters healing and protecting all the time while the third character attacks to slowly whittle down her remaining health.*

THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT PLAYERS' GUIDE

Ed Zitron 2CV with the full skinny on starting the Free Play and Bustin' Out Modes...

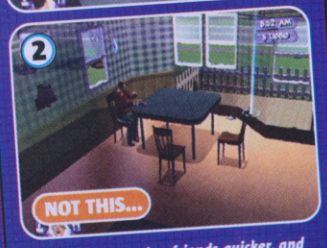
1 CREATION POINTS

Allocate your points to different personality traits, like outgoing, neatness, nice, active and playful. This will decide your Sim's personality, so make sure you choose wisely when spending your points. Here are some tips to steer you right...

NEATNESS

Pros: It keeps your room level high, as your house is clean
Cons: It slows you down when you decide to clean up at the worst moment
Handling the cons: If your Sim has low neatness points, hire a maid. They're cheap, and handle most of the cleaning
Suggested points: 1

OUTGOING



Pros: Your Sim makes friends quicker, and is the life of the party
Cons: Your Sim can party too hard, get to bed late, getting up late and missing work
Handling the cons: Keep an eye on the time when partying, and make sure you get a good night's sleep
Suggested points: 6

ACTIVE

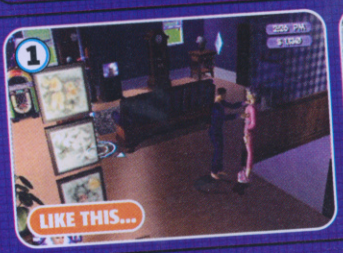
Pros: Your Sim will need less sleep, get up quicker, and learn skills faster
Cons: Sims can develop unusual sleeping patterns, and get in bad moods before work when you wake them up late
Handling the cons: Send your Sim to bed, rather then waiting for them to go
Suggested points: 10

PLAYFUL

Pros: The higher your playful stat, the more things you can have fun with
Cons: The lower your playful stat, the less you can do to cheer up your Sim
Handling the cons: Buy a Meet Marco computer when you can afford it; any Sim can enjoy it
Suggested points: 2

NICE

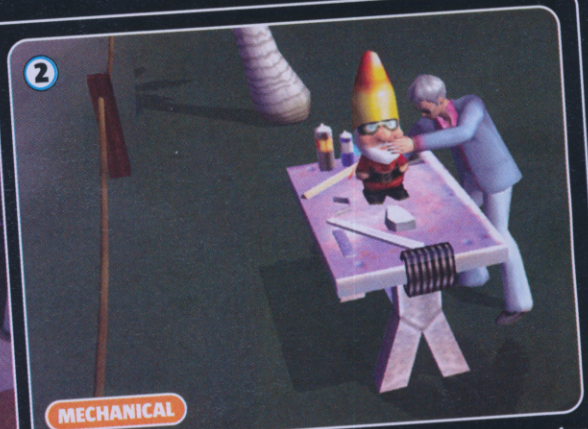
Pros: Your Sim gets on easier with other Sims
Cons: Smaller effect past 5 points
Handling the cons: The higher levels still have a noticeable effect on socialising.
Suggested points: 5



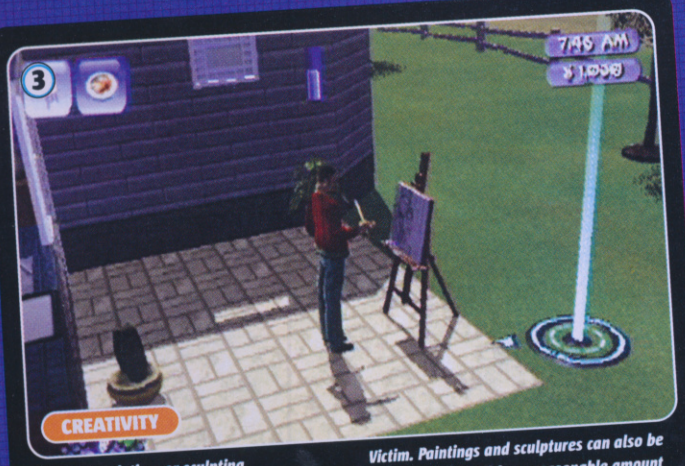
2 CAREER POINTS

These points can help around the house, but are also used for gaining promotion in certain careers. Spend the first level getting most of these to around three or four to make promotion that bit easier to get.

Raised by: Reading about it
Useful for: Cooking in general. It's also used in various missions, and the higher your stat is, the more nourishing meals you cook for you/your friends



Raised by: Reading about it, or using the workbench
Useful for: Fixing broken appliances, making money via selling gnomes from the workbench, and some career paths require it, such as the mad scientist



Raised by: Painting, or sculpting.
Useful for: Some careers, such as Fashion Victim. Paintings and sculptures can also be sold, and can sell for a reasonable amount

Raised by: Running on the treadmill, weights, swimming or by using the climbing frame
Useful for: It advances certain careers, such as Jock and Paramilitary

Raised by: Speaking into the mirror.
Useful for: A few careers, such as Mad Scientist, and Movie Star. Anything that involves talking to yourself, basically

Raised by: Playing chess, and looking through the telescope
Useful for: Going up the career ladder as a Mad Scientist and the Paramilitary

3 TOP 10 TIPS

TIP 1 The best thing to buy your Sim when you start to make a lot of money is a nice bed; the extra sleep and relaxation puts them in a good mood for work

TIP 2 The moment you're able to, get to the shop and hand over the readies for a Meet Marco computer. It raises fun levels faster then any other item in the game

TIP 3 Always set your Sim up with a love interest. This will mean that you have a source of social interaction, and good moods that doesn't require much effort or money

TIP 4 If your Sim is lacking social interaction or is having no fun, take a day off work. You can miss alternate days, if you have the cash, but miss two in a row and it's goodbye

TIP 5 Club Rubb is the best place to visit for social interaction; spin the decks, serve some drinks, or just dance to get all the attention your Sim needs

TIP 6 Remember; at 90+ friendship points, ANY Sim will sleep with ANY sim, regardless of sex. Thus, you can improve sleep/relaxation of two Sims by buying a nice bed, and both sleep in it, saving money

TIP 7 At parties, musical instruments are the best thing for social interaction. While you play, you have fun, but anyone watching will enjoy it, and gain friendship points at the same time

TIP 8 When you're about to throw a party, serve dinner, then make the call to get people over. When they arrive, and start eating, serve again, to keep them all happy

TIP 9 To talk to somebody repeatedly, select talk, then compliment, then talk again, then delete compliment from the move queue. This can be done with any ability in the game

TIP 10 When you first meet somebody, wait until around 30 social points before complimenting; if you do so too early, you'll offend them badly and have to work much harder to be their friend

Randy Hart, all buffed up and ready to go and meet his girlfriend, Frigid Liver

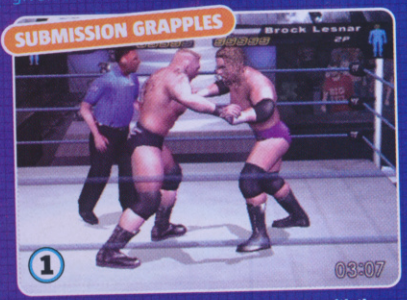
WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN PLAYERS' GUIDE

Ed Zitron lays the smackdown upon the basics, the brutality and the coolest moves of eight of the greatest wrestling superstars

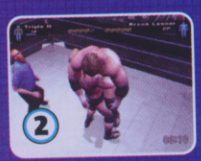
GRAPPLE

There are four different kinds of grapples in Here Comes The Pain, each one useful in a given situation. Here's how to pull 'em off...

SUBMISSION GRAPPLES



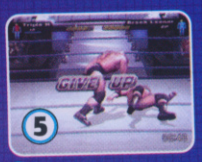
To move into a submission grapple, start with the submission grapple base (●+▼)



Then press one of the submission grapple moves, such as ●+■

Get it right and you'll pull out a limb-destroying submission move!

Tap the buttons repeatedly if you get the chance to force a submit



If you get it right, they'll give up and the match is yours!

SIGNATURE GRAPPLES

To move into a signature grapple, start with the base (●+■)

Then press one of the signature grapple moves, such as ●+▼

Get this all right and you'll perform a crowd-pleasing signature move!

The crowd goes wild for these moves, and they cause good damage

THE BASICS

These work for every wrestler in the game, but can produce a different move depending on which superstar you're playing as.

R3+▼ ..... Appeal to the crowd, press the R3 trigger down
R3+● ..... Appeal to the crowd, press the R3 trigger left
R3+▲ ..... Appeal to the crowd, press the R3 trigger up
R3+■ ..... Appeal to the crowd, press the R3 trigger right
L1 ..... Weapon SmackDown
L1+▲/▼/●/■ ..... Weapon SmackDown, plus a direction key (▲/▼/●/■)
L1 ..... Smackdown!
L1+▲/▼/●/■ ..... Smackdown! Plus a direction key
● ..... Grapple your opponent from the front
●+▼ ..... Grapple from the front and press ▼ (Submission Grapple Base)
●+● ..... Grapple from the front and press ● (Signature Grapple Base)
●+▲ ..... Grapple from the front and press ▲ (Power Grapple Base)
●+■ ..... Grapple your opponent from the front and press ■ (Quick Grapple Base)
● ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the front
●+▼ ..... From Submission Grapple Base, press ●+▼ (Submission Grapple)
●+● ..... From Submission Grapple Base, press ●+● (Submission Grapple)
●+▲ ..... From Submission Grapple Base, press ●+▲ (Submission Grapple)
●+■ ..... From Submission Grapple Base, press ●+■ (Submission Grapple)
●+▼ ..... From Signature Grapple Base, press ●+▼ (Signature Grapple)
●+● ..... From Signature Grapple Base, press ●+● (Signature Grapple)
●+▲ ..... From Signature Grapple Base, press ●+▲ (Signature Grapple)
●+■ ..... From Signature Grapple Base, press ●+■ (Signature Grapple)
●+▼ ..... From Power Grapple Base, press ●+▼ (Power Grapple)
●+● ..... From Power Grapple Base, press ●+● (Power Grapple)
●+▲ ..... From Power Grapple Base, press ●+▲ (Power Grapple)
●+■ ..... From Power Grapple Base, press ●+■ (Power Grapple)
●+▼ ..... From Quick Grapple Base, press ●+▼ (Quick Grapple)
●+● ..... From Quick Grapple Base, press ●+● (Quick Grapple)
●+▲ ..... From Quick Grapple Base, press ●+▲ (Quick Grapple)
●+■ ..... From Quick Grapple Base, press ●+■ (Quick Grapple)
○ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent
○+▼ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent and press ▼
○+●/▲/■ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent and press●/▲/■
○+■ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent while pressing ■/■
○+●/▲/■ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent andpress●/▲/■
○+▲ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent and press ▲
○+■ ..... Kick/punch a standing opponent and press ■
● ..... Grapple your opponent from the back
●+▼ ..... Grapple your opponent from the back and press ▼
●+● ..... Grapple your opponent from the back and press ●
●+▲ ..... Grapple your opponent from the back and press ▲
●+■ ..... Grapple your opponent from the back and press ■
● ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the back
●+▼ ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the back and press ▼
●+● ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the back and press ●
●+▲ ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the back and press ▲
●+■ ..... Grapple your groggy opponent from the back and press ■
● ..... Grapple your opponent's upper body on the ground
●+▼ ..... Grapple your opponent's upper body on the ground and press ▼
●+● ..... Grapple your opponent's upper body on the ground and press ●
●+▲ ..... Grapple your opponent's upper body on the ground and press ▲
●+■ ..... Grapple your opponent's upper body on the ground and press ■
● ..... Grapple your opponent's lower body on the ground

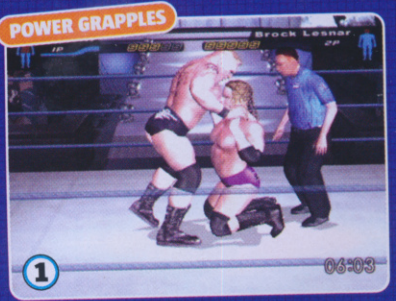
QUICK GRAPPLES

To move into a quick grapple, start with the quick grapple base (●+■)

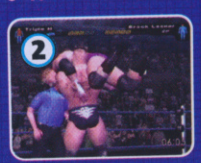
Then press one of the quick grapple moves, such as ●+▲

You'll perform a quick grapple - great for small, sharp hits

POWER GRAPPLES



To move into a power grapple, start with the quick grapple base (●+▲)

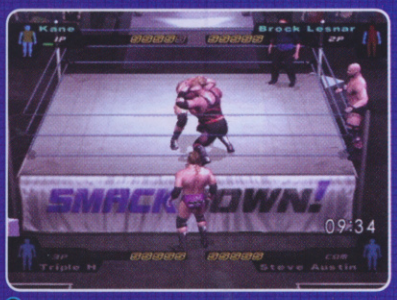


Then press one of the power grapple moves, such as ●+■

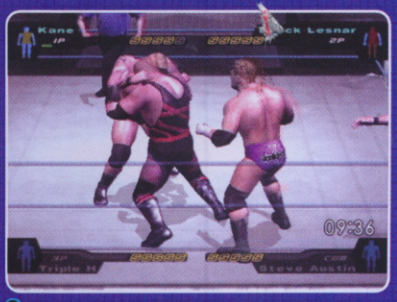
This will perform a power grapple move; these cause the most actual damage to your opponent's limbs/body

DOUBLE TEAM GRAPPLES

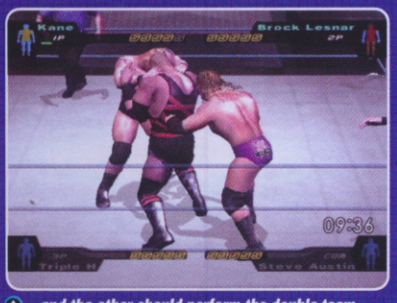
These buddy-buddy grapples may be difficult to perform, but they are incredibly powerful once executed.



Make sure that you have the guy you want to grapple on your side of the arena

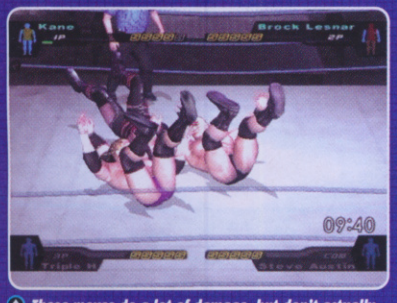


One of your team should start off grappling the opponent from the front...



...and the other should perform the double team move from the back (EG: ◉+⬅)

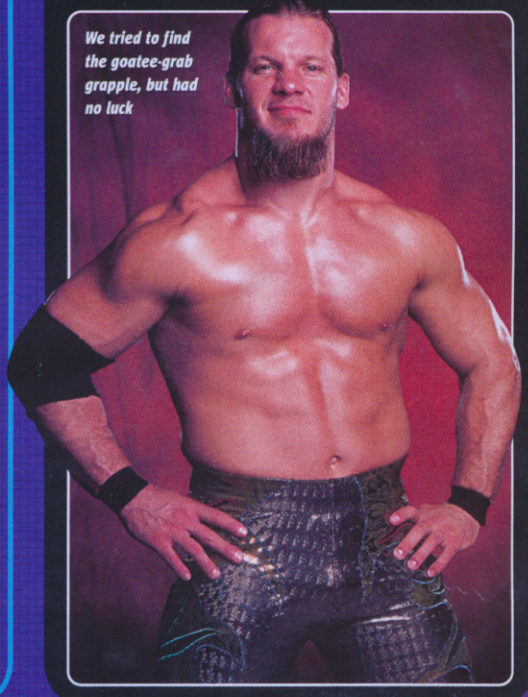
Watch in awe as your team comes together and lays pure pain on the opponent!



These moves do a lot of damage, but don't actually gain you smackdown power. Also, it's easy to get stopped before starting them by the referee

THE BASICS CONTINUED

◉+⬇ .....Grapple your opponent's lower body on the ground and press ⬇
◉+⬅ .....Grapple your opponent's lower body on the ground and press ⬅
◉+⬆ .....Grapple your opponent's lower body on the ground and press ⬆
◉+➡ .....Grapple your opponent's lower body on the ground and press ➡
◉ .....Grapple from the front between the Hell-in-a-cell and the ring
◉+⬆⬇⬅➡ ....Front grapple between Hell-in-a-cell and the ring and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
◉ .....Grapple from the back between the Hell-in-a-cell and the ring
◉+⬆⬇⬅➡ .....Back grapple between Hell-in-a-cell and the ring and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
✪ .....Kick/Punch your opponent on the floor
✪+⬆⬇ .....Kick/Punch your opponent on the floor and press ⬆/⬇
✪+⬅/➡ .....Kick/Punch your opponent on the floor and press ⬅/➡
◉+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Grapple your opponent on the ropes and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
◉ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle
◉+⬇ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬇
◉+⬅ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬅
◉+⬆ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬆
◉+➡ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ➡
◉ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the back
◉+⬇ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the back and press ⬇
◉+⬅ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the back and press ⬅
◉+⬆ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the back and press ⬆
◉+➡ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ➡
✪ .....Run at your opponent on the upper turnbuckle and press X
✪+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Run at opponent on upper turnbuckle and press X + ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
◉ .....Grapple your opponent on the lower turnbuckle and from the front
◉+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Grapple on lower turnbuckle, from the front and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
✪ .....Run at your opponent on the lower turnbuckle and press X
✪ .....Dive from the turnbuckle onto your opponent
✪+⬇ .....Dive from the turnbuckle onto your opponent and press ⬇
✪+⬅ .....Dive from the turnbuckle onto your opponent and press ⬅
✪+⬆ .....Dive from the turnbuckle onto your opponent and press ⬆
✪+➡ .....Dive from the turnbuckle onto your opponent and press ➡
✪ .....With opponent outside ring and you inside, run at them and press X
✪.....Attack opponent with them at the ropes and you inside the ring
✪ .....Attack opponent with them at the ropes and you outside the ring
◉ .....Run at your groggy opponent and grapple them from the front
◉+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Run at groggy opponent, front grapple them and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
✪ .....Run at your opponent and punch/kick
✪+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Run at your opponent and punch/kick and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
◉ .....Run at your opponent's back and grapple
◉+⬆/⬇/⬅/➡ .....Run at your opponent's back and grapple and press ⬆/⬇/⬅/➡
◉.....Grapple your opponent as they run up to you
◉+⬆/⬇ .....Grapple your opponent as they run up to you and press ⬆/⬇
◉+⬅/➡ .....Grapple your opponent as they run up to you and press ⬅/➡
◉ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front
◉+⬇ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬇
◉+⬅ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬅
◉+⬆ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ⬆
◉+➡ .....Grapple your opponent on the turnbuckle from the front and press ➡

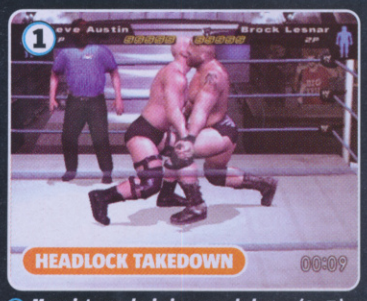


We tried to find the goatee-grab grapple, but had no luck

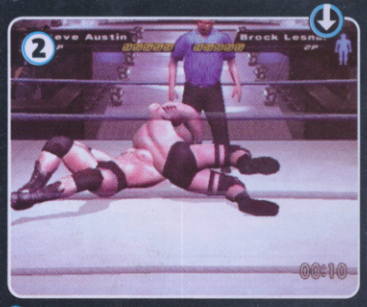
THE COOLEST MOVES

What good are the coolest wrestlers, without their coolest moves? Toss all good, that's what. But don't worry, CVG's here to show you.

STEVE AUSTIN



Move into a submission grapple base... (◉+⬇)



...then press ◉+⬅ to perform it

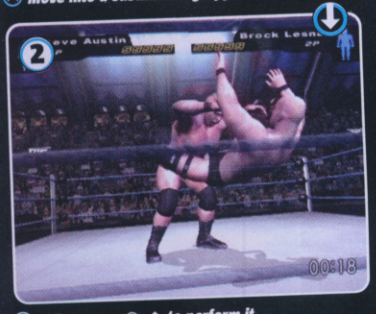
Move into a signature grapple base... (◉+⬅)

...then press ◉+⬇ to perform the stunner

Move into a power grapple base... (◉+⬆) then press ◉+⬅ to perform it

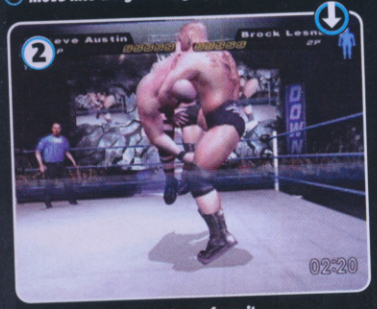
BROCK LESNAR

Move into a submission grapple base... (●+▼)

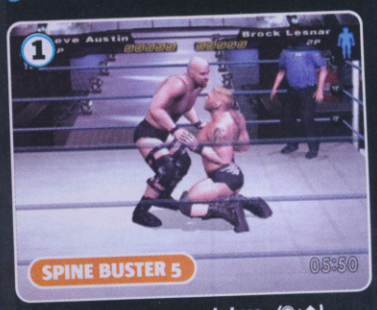


...then press ●+▲ to perform it

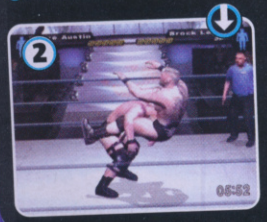
Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀)



...then press ●+◀ to perform it



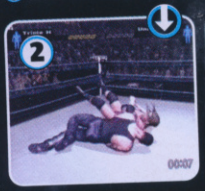
Move into a power grapple base... (●+▲)



...then press ●+▼ to perform it. Oof!

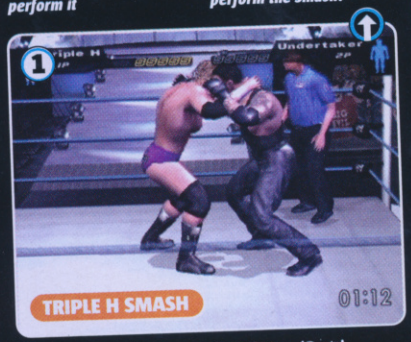
TRIPPLE H

Move into a submission grapple base... (●+▼)



...then press ●+▲ to perform it

...then press ●+▼ to perform the Smash!



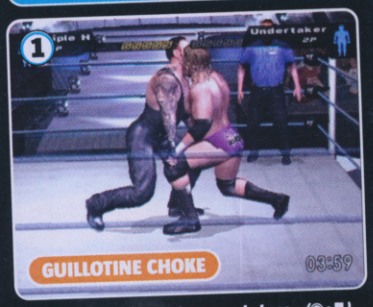
Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀)

KURT ANGLE

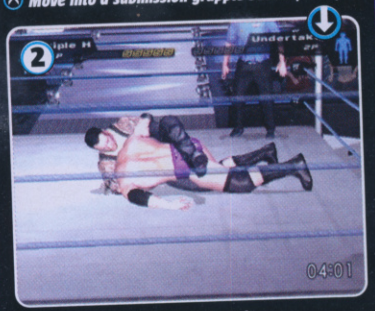
Move into a submission grapple base... (●+▼) then press ●+◀ to perform it

Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀) then press ●+◀ to pull it off

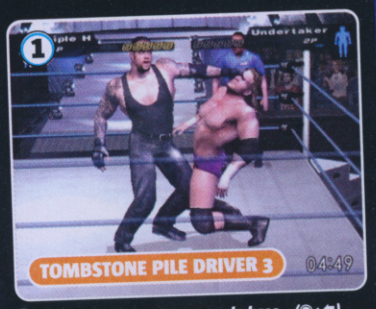
UNDERTAKER



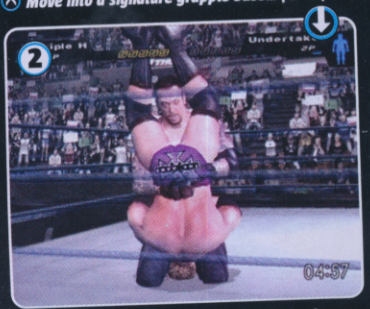
Move into a submission grapple base... (●+▼)



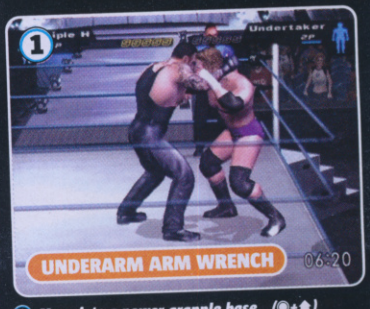
...then press ●+◀ to perform it



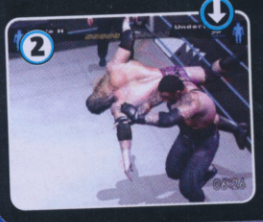
Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀)



...then press ●+▼ to begin a world of pain



Move into a power grapple base... (●+▲)

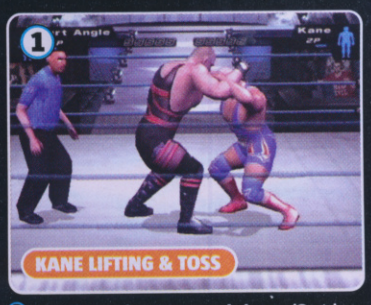


...then press ●+▼ to unleash muchos suffering

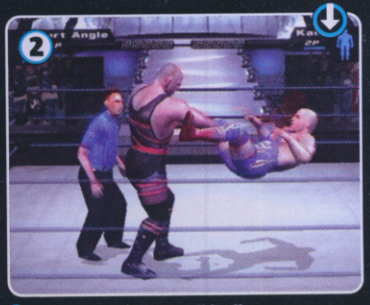
KANE

Move into a submission grapple base... (●+▼)

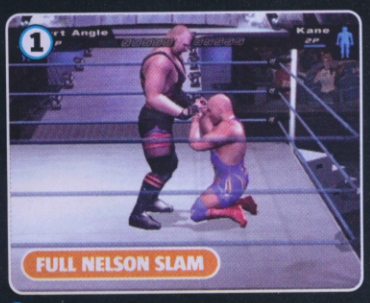
...then press ●+◀ to perform it



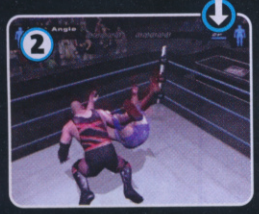
Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀)



...then press ●+◀ to pull it off

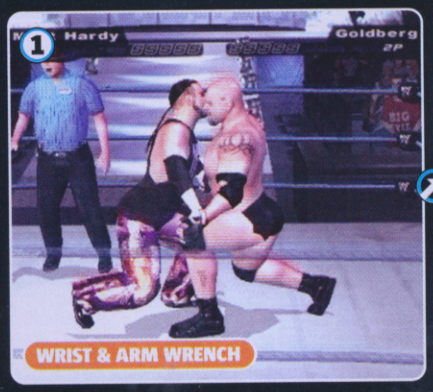


Move into a power grapple base... (●+▲)



...then press ●+▼ for a Nelson the admiral himself would be proud of

MATT HARDY



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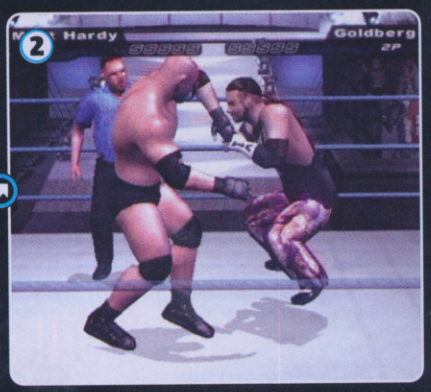

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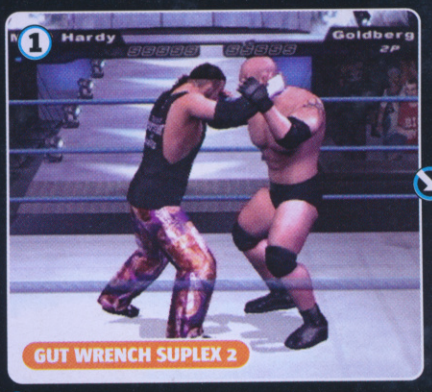

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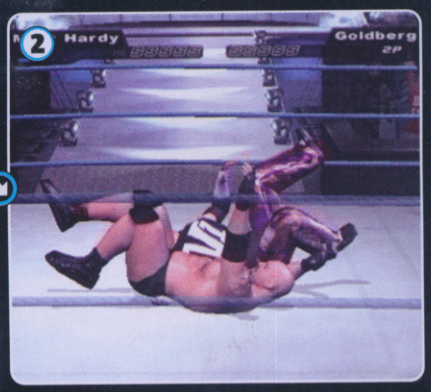

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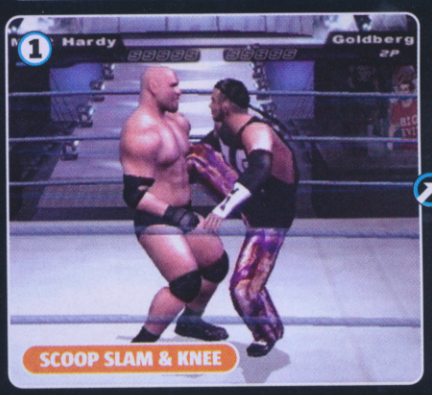
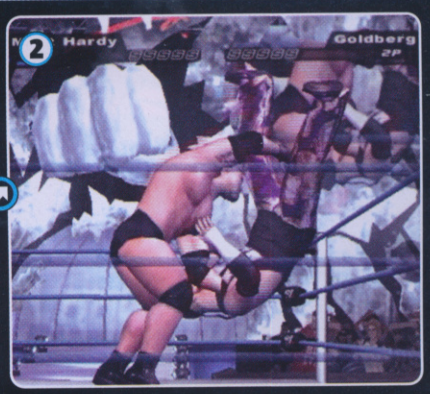
GOLDBERG



Move into a signature grapple base... (●+◀)



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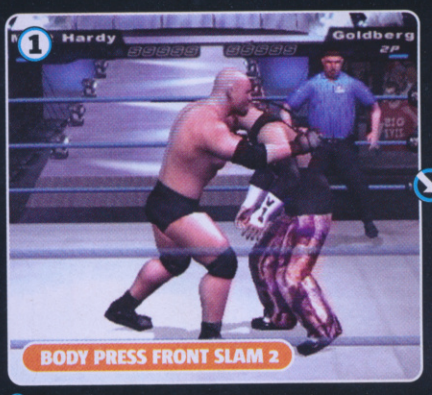
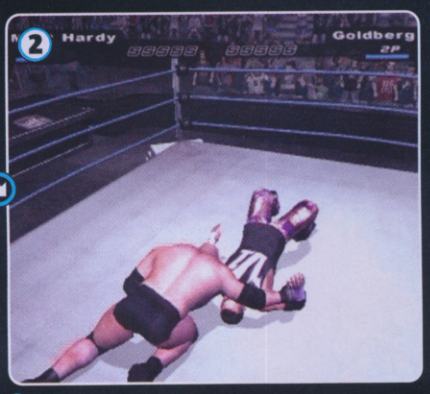


Move into a power grapple base... (●+▲)



...then press ●+◀ to perform it. Blam!

LOG ON AND LOAD UP

Still hungry for more even after thumbing through this game-packed issue of CVG? Logging onto **ComputerAndVideogames.com** will satisfy the biggest gaming appetites

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ComputerAndVideogames.com is Europe's leading online news service covering games on a global scale. Any self-respecting games fan simply cannot afford to miss the latest developments on PS2, Xbox, Game Boy Advance, GameCube and PC from around the world. There's only one place to keep up and that's here. CVG's news is an essential part of your daily routine.

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REVIEWS

FULLY INDEPENDENT & MULTI-FORM[illegible] TRUST NO ONE ELSE

CVG EXPERT REVIEWERS

Team CVG is here to make sure you never buy a duff game again

Maura Sutton
DYNASTIC WARRIOR
Maura loves all things Eastern and is our expert on Koei's Dynasty Warriors extravaganzas. There's so many of 'em that she's guaranteed regular work for at least another seven years

Graeme Boyd
CUNNING QUARTERBACK
He reckons he's buff but we all know he's been padding out his muscle tops and sports jock with egg cartons and bubble wrap from our stationery cupboard

Steve O'Hagan
GOBLIN KING
As well as loving the feel of chain mail against his skin, Steve's been serenading us with melancholy tunes on guitar to soothe the stress of getting the mag finished

Paul Davies
ROBOT TROOPER
Our Paul is so addicted to mixing and matching his Gotcha Borg units that he's started trying to accessorise and colour co-ordinate the rest of us in matching outfits. The big weirdo

Paul Presley
JEDI KNIGHT
Always the professional, Pres takes his role in the Star Wars Galaxies universe so seriously he's started commuting to work on the back of a Wampa. We cower in fear of our lives each and every morning

OOH YES, IT'S LADIES' NIGHT

Good old Lara. Call her a pneumatically enhanced bint if you like but she's done more for women's lib in just a few years than any boiler suit-wearing activist has managed in thirty (sorry girls, but it's true).

A few years back you'd more likely be frazzled in the nuts by a rogue thunderbolt than be caught playing as a female lead hero in a videogame. Now, however, we're all perfectly happy to go girly, and worry as much about keeping our heroine's hair 'just perfect' as we do about where our next enemy might be hiding. Granted, our favourite female leads are all kick-ass honeys with their curvy bits in all the right places and proportion, but who wants to play as a minger? With games like the killer Kya (our EXCLUSIVE big review this month), Rogue Ops, Dynasty Warriors 4 XL and even Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance II, it seems we're more than happy to explore our softer sides through gaming. It's gotta be better than taking up embroidery and needlework anyhow.

Lee
Lee Skittrell
Games Editor

THIS MONTH

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86 Flipnic PS2
88 Grand Theft Auto Double Pack ..... XBOX
90 Rogue Ops ..... PS2, XBOX
92 Midway Arcade Treasures PS2
94 NFL Street ..... PS2, XBOX, GC
96 Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided ..... PC
98 Carve ..... XBOX
99 Destruction Derby Arenas PS2
100 Gotcha Force ..... GC
101 Conflict: Desert Storm II ..... GC

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

We only review the biggest, most badassed and best releases of the month, and our scores are based on one key measure: fun! This is how we break them down...

1	WHY, GOD, WHY?
2	STINKS. NEVER PLAY THIS
3	A WASTE OF YOUR MONEY
4	MAYBE RENT, NEVER BUY
5	VERY AVERAGE
6	FAIRLY SOLID BUT NOWT SPECIAL
7	TASTY
8	QUALITY GAME. CONSIDER BUYING IT
9	CLASS ON A DISC
10	AN ABSOLUTE MUST THAT DEFINES THE GENRE

CVG AWARDS SYSTEM

These [illegible]ades don't get dished out just because a game gets a certain score. They're CVG's way of telling you which are our pet hates and personal favourites.

CVG ESSENTIAL
The most coveted award a game can get. It's worth buying the console to play this game

CVG RECOMMENDED
A damn good game. If they not boast the mould, but it's a cut above the rest

CVG GAME OF THE MONTH
Doesn't have to be the highest scorer, but it's CVG's pick of the bunch this month

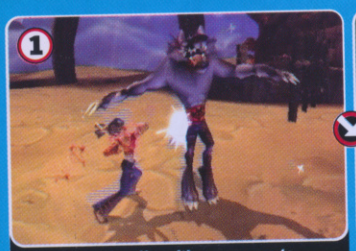
CVG STINKER
More abominable than a Yeti

TWISTED SISTER

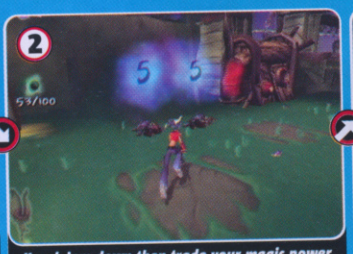
Kya's got a kick ass story to it. Zapped into a bizarre but beautiful world, she's kicking off with the bad guys to save them from themselves.

See, the vicious Wolfens are actually nice, friendly Nativs transformed by Brazul, the uber bad dude, who also happens – coincidentally – to be Kya's dad as well as the kidnapper of Kya's bro Frank...

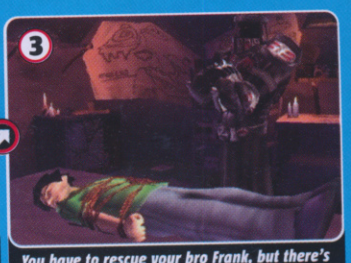
Whatever, you need to pummel the Wolfens until they're out cold, then use your magic powers to exorcise them. Don't want to kill 'em, see?



You need to be nifty with your moves to defeat the bigger Wolfens



Knock 'em down then trade your magic power to restore the Nativs

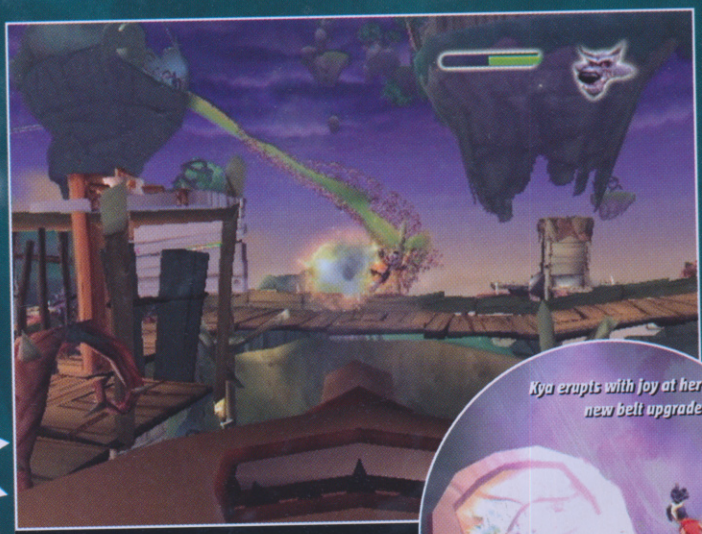


You have to rescue your bro Frank, but there's a lot more to do on the way

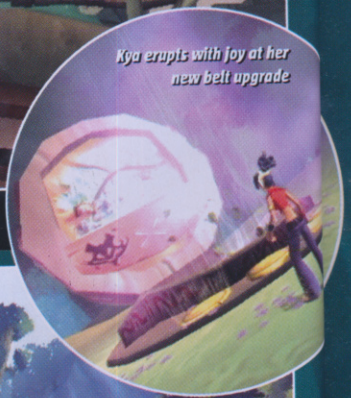
EXTREME SPORTS MEETS EXTREMELY AWESOME ACTION ADVENTURING

Kya DARK LINEAGE

computer and video games EXCLUSIVE REVIEW DEFINITIVE FIRST REVIEW – WEEKS AHEAD OF THE REST!



Blasting those Wolfens with the air cannon is wicked-cool and dead useful too



Kya erupts with joy at her new belt upgrade

GAME INFO OUT: FEBRUARY 27 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1 REVIEWED ON PS2

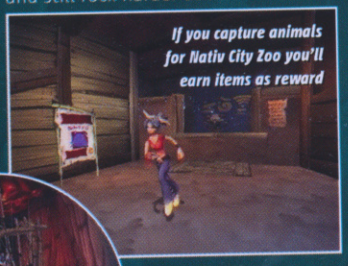
ONLINE GAMING

PUB: ATARI DEV: EDEN STUDIOS

WWW.KYA-GAME.COM

Reckon you're a god at extreme sports? You might be able to grind railings down the park or surf rolling waves at the beach, but until you've hurtled down the trunk of a giant tree in a spray of splinters, or free-fallen from impossible heights with only strange alien flora to cushion your fall, you can't call yourself a true extreme star.

Kya: Dark Lineage proves you can play cartoon-style action adventures and still rock harder at adrenaline



If you capture animals for Nativ City Zoo you'll earn items as reward

Follow that cage! Pump with the X button to stabilise your soaring

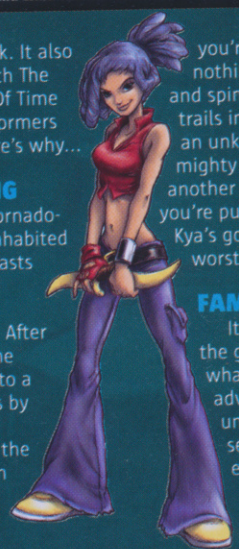
This worm boss folds if you hit the nubbins on his belly enough times

Burst forth from the underground wind tunnels and marvel at the beautiful graphics

activities than Tony Hawk. It also has more in common with The Wind Waker or Ocarina Of Time than traditional 3D platformers like Mario Sunshine. Here's why...

GO IN WITH A BANG

Sucked into a strange, tornado-filled world seemingly inhabited by two tribes of furry beasts (the Nativs and the Wolfens) Kya's troubles begin right from the off. After being manhandled by the Nativs, you're chased into a complex system of roots by bomb-spewing Wolfens. Sliding down the vines, the floor gives way and then you're tumbling through nothingness as boulders crash and spin about your ears. Cutting trails in the air, you speed towards an unknown fate when a sudden mighty gust pushes you into another massive updraft. Finally you're puked up into safety. Lucky Kya's got dreads or she'd have the worst Bed Head ever!



FAMILIAR BUT FAB

It's an awesome opening to the game, and a great taster of what to expect later on in the adventure. That is: expect the unexpected. From the severely sexy visuals, to the enormous and complicated

WELCOME TO THE WINDY CITY

The mysterious world that Kya is zapped to is a spiralling tornado of interconnected islands and chunks of wind-blasted rock.

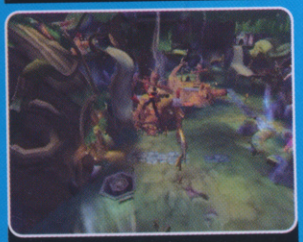
It's absolutely enormous too and each area has its own unique hazards and features. Check out our tourists' guide to the most interesting areas you'll be blown to (and blown away by) in the first big section of the game.

NATIV VILLAGE

The Nativ's humungous hometown lies in ruins as you begin your quest, but as you rescue more Nativs, more of the city's former glory is restored

Use the cannons on the raised area to explore Nativ City much more quickly

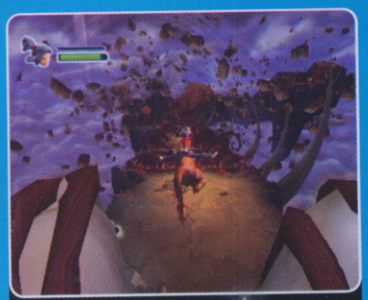
Shops' wares are marked on the map to help you locate what you want



Nativ City is huge, and areas only open up when you have the right skills

HUNTER'S DOMAIN

Tame your first Jamgut and try to rescue Atea, head of the Nativs, in this gale-filled wasteland



Forget the Rolling Stones – rock and roll with the flying boulders in this aerial nightmare

FLYING FOREST

A walk in the peaceful forest soon turns into a game of hide 'n' sneak as Kya discovers the Wolfens' factory

Use the machinery to help you infiltrate the processing plant

THE ROOTS

You start your adventure here and return many times as you earn new abilities. There's a Wolfen stronghold and muchos surfing action

Return here when you have the surfboard as you'll be able to get to new areas

LOOK OUT FOR THESE

You can't just bluster blindly through the windy world and hope to survive.

Learning which objects help and which hurt is vital. Memorise the uses and locations of these handy objects and you'll be okay.

These green blobs recharge your magic energy, essential for exorcising Wolfens

Look out for these plants when skydiving as they cushion your fall

Hop onto the air cannon to take down multiple Wolfens and blast open new routes

Recharge your energy at these crystals in exchange for green magic energy

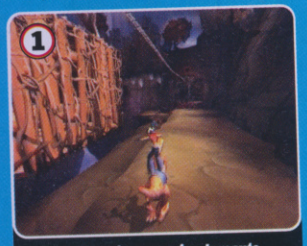
Use these shortcuts to zip back and forth between areas with minimum fuss

These walls offer case-sensitive clues as to what to do next

BAD GIRLS

As extreme sports heroines go, Kya's got more moves than Tony, Mat and Bam combined.

Large chunks of the game involve floating or falling, surfing strange surfaces and riding awesome wind currents through treacherous canyons of death. You even get to tame wild beasts called Jamguts and balance atop their flabby flanks, Wildboyz style.



You can leap from moving Jamguts, Cowboy-style

Careening down canyons of rippling air currents is hazardous

Surf the landfill sites of the world! Such a glamourous lifestyle...

The awesome vertical skydiving sections will make you dizzy

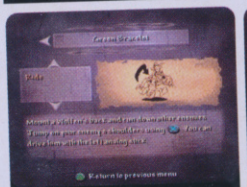
WOLFEN SLAUGHTER 101

Bracelets are girly, true, but when you slip them on in Kya at least they bestow you awesome new fighting abilities.

If we could perform some of the dazzling and devastating martial arts seen in the game by simply wearing an armband in real life, we'd get ourselves down to Accessorise straight away.

Catch a Wolfen by its tail and make like a hammer-throw champ

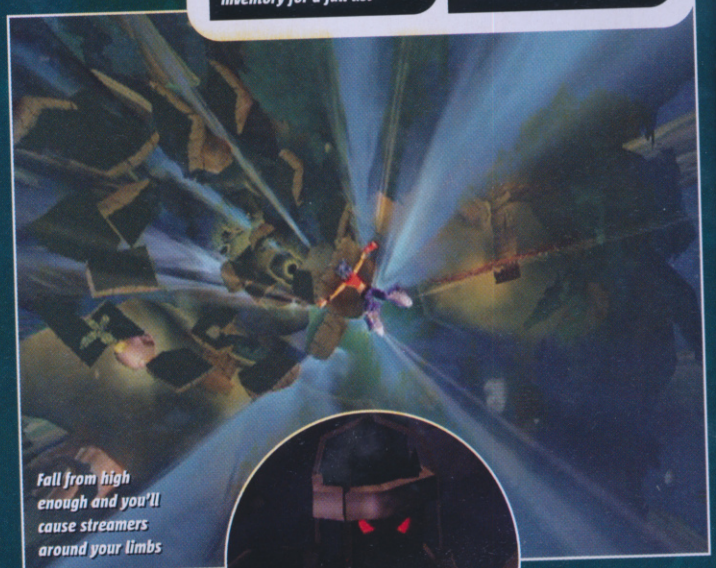
When fists fail, saddle up on a Jamgut and spear larger enemies



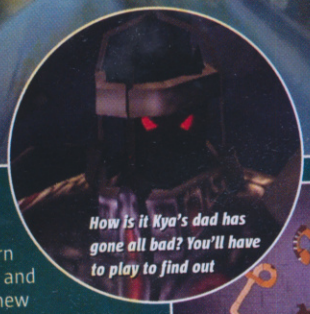
If you forget what moves you can pull off, just check your inventory for a full list

When there's more than one Wolfen you target the nearest automatically

Upgrades like this, which lets you carry more magic power, are a pain to get to



Fall from high enough and you'll cause streamers around your limbs



How is it Kya's dad has gone all bad? You'll have to play to find out

All of the areas are so huge that even the map screens are daunting

structure of islands you need to explore, to the complexity of combat and the way the game continues opening up as you gain new skills, Kya is a real surprise. It's true the structure of the game will be familiar to anyone who's played a 3D Zelda game, or to a lesser extent Jak II, but the depth and polish of everything seen in Kya makes this feel much more than just the sum of a bunch of borrowed gaming parts.

Nativ Village, for instance, is essentially the main hub from which other areas are reached. But it's also a living, breathing record of your progress through the game. As you rescue more Nativs they return to the town to rebuild and open new stores and new areas for Kya to explore. Your progress through the game is limited to how many Nativs you save and how much cash you sniff out to buy abilities from the shops they start to open. How much cooler is that than a skanky stats screen?

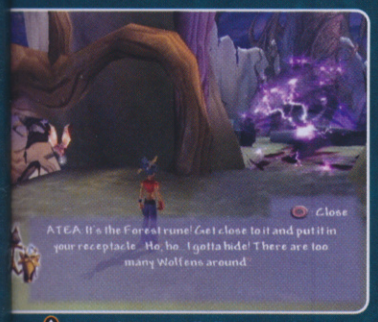
Avoid the lasers or the Wolfens unleash deadly enerby blasts

TOUGHER THAN TYSON

The adventuring is fast, full of surprises and the scale of the levels you hop, skip and punch around is enough to make your brain hurt. Thankfully, the combat in Kya is just as kick-ass cool. There's no jumping on enemies' heads to kill them.

Controlling Kya is super challenging in these areas full of narrow tree trunks

The Nativs seem to be every bit as horrified by Kya as she is by them



Your trek sees you finding parts of a mystical rune as well as saving your bro

Instead you're going to need to train at combos and read your rival Wolfens' moves in battle if you want to last more than five minutes. You start with simple kicks and punches, but as you progress and become able to purchase shiny new armbands, brand new kung-fu moves become available. Before long you'll be vaulting across Wolfens and snapping their furry backs like twigs, or roundhousing their asses before socking them in the jaw with a megaton uppercut. Our favourite kill is leaping onto a Wolfen's back, pulling its hair and using the prey as a dazed and confused battering ram. We're bad people.

HOTSHOT!

Kya's more beautiful to look at than a naked supermodel boxing contest.

At the risk of sounding like fruity cravat-wearing art critics, we reckon the visuals are heavily stylised so that everything has an organic, swirly kinda look to it. The draw distance is phenomenal too, making this by far one of the most technically impressive games available on ANY system.

You can see for miles which is both impressive and essential for planning where to go next

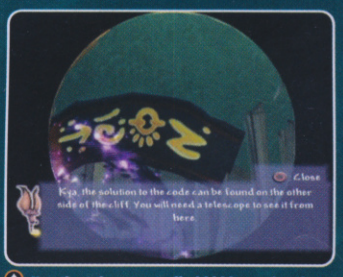
TRUE COLOURS

Kya is an absolutely brilliant adventure. You'll have seen some of what it has to offer before, and it's worth bearing in mind that the primary colours and undeniably French arty style won't make you happy if all you play are Tom Clancy games or WWII shooters. But who needs those? Kya is incredibly well made, head-poppingly huge, 100 per cent pure fun and just original enough to twinkle brighter than its recent competition. CVG

Only the Jamgut is heavy enough to activate these switches

The bigger they are, the harder they die! Kill, kill pussycat!

Nativs are cute but they tend to shout at each other, and Kya, quite a lot



Use the telescope to find hidden codes that unlock doors for sexy secrets

Games VERDICT

Not everyone will like the visual style or the more traditional adventure elements. But this is one of the biggest, best looking and most ball-bustingly enjoyable adventures on PS2. **Lee**

- Perfect pace – big but never daunting
- The combat is hard and satisfying
- The best-produced game in the world?

- It looks a bit younger than it plays
- Uses many traditional action game staples
- The Nativs might be too cute for some

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ The Wind Waker (GC), ■ Jak II (PS2)

These burrowing bugs have rock-hard shells that can only be crushed with the Hammer of Heroes

MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN™

GAME INFO

OUT: FEBRUARY 13 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: CAPCOM EUROPE DEV: CAPCOM DIGITAL STUDIOS
WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM/MINISITES/MAXIMO2

REVIEWED ON PS2

CRACK OPEN THE HORLICKS! OLD SKOOL IS BACK... AGAIN!!

Some games feel so familiar it's like kicking about town in your favourite trainers. This is how it is with Maximo Vs Army of Zin. There's nothing shocking about the way it plays, good or bad, but you feel so at home it's almost cosy.

You play the heroic warrior Maximo, fighting the Lord Bane's evil yet bizarrely clockwork forces. There's a princess to be rescued – exactly like the original Maximo of 2001 – and this corny theme isn't the only thing remaining in the sequel. Instead of viewing all this as lazy, boring and has-been, we're thinking more along the lines of Air Jordans – timeless and classic. It's a continuation of a CVG favourite after all – the unforgettable Ghouls & Ghosts series.

HAMMERS AND MASH

What you get is a succession of visually astounding 3D stages, filled with challenging third-person mayhem. Maximo's range of moves are plentiful, but nice and simple to perform. His choice of weapons – either his sword, Parilla, or the hefty Hammer of Heroes – affects the style of attack. With his sword, Maximo swiftly scores many strikes before the enemy gets a look in. The hammer can floor larger foes which can be mashed while down. New to Maximo 2 are combinations of hits that build to create a kind of battle fury that helps if things get crowded. Additional, stylish attacks can be launched by using Maximo's well-handy Double Jump ability.

The only way through here is to find all the crystals and have them ringing in unison

Pretty much every location in the game looks as splendid as this

CHICKEN DEATH!

We've seen some pathetic excuses for bosses, even in some of the biggest PS2 titles. But when Army of Zin throws an end-of-level guardian at you, it doesn't mess around. These guys are rockin' rock-tacular!

THE HOUSE CRASHER

A meteorite crashes through the roof of a house. The house grows legs, then the door bursts open like a giant cuckoo clock to reveal... a giant clockwork chicken?!

I ain't never seen a haas with legs like that, or a haas with legs for that matter!

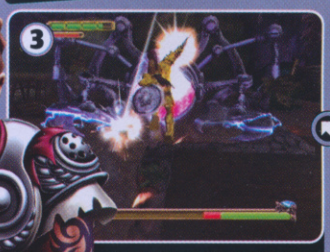
Look what's hiding beneath the house! Those guns aren't just for decoration either

This is one big angry chicken, and I am one big hen-pecked legendary hero

CYCLOCKS

Some sort of mechanical floating eyeball hops into a robot suit and proceeds to bash down the walls. This game likes breaking up happy homes!

Avoid the pincers and leap to take out the eyeball. Spectacular, non? Oui? Non?



Eat my legendary sword you foul eyeball of Hades!

Not all eyeballs cry when poked, this one runs after you firing laser beams! Yikes!

See that hanging chest? That kind of secret'll earn you bonus points

SCYTHE OF RELIEF

Death himself, aka 'Grim' to those who know him, is your good buddy in Maximo 2. He still expects to be paid for reviving a fallen Maximo, but he's also available to intervene during battle under extreme circumstances.

Also takes bookings for weddings, Barmitzvahs and of course funerals...

"Here I am! Where's the party?"

"Tell you what, you can't cheat death."

Why, what a cute rabbit. Make a delicious stew. Hey! What the...!

VILLAGE PEOPLE

While you go about your business destroying Lord Bane's Clockwork Army, there are innocents who appreciate being rescued.

Protect them from harm and they'll give you loads of cash or point you in the direction of useful items.

"Heeey, how you doin'? I'd love to help your mates, but what's in it for me?"

"Yeh, sure. What do you say we meet up when this is all over, hmm?"

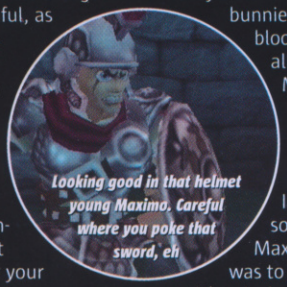
"I was going to stand and watch but it seemed unfair. You do pay cash don't you?"

"Nah, not sure about the colour"

BUTTON UP

Being good at Maximo rarely takes more than a knack for timing your one-button attacks. Enemies charge at you thick (as in plentiful, as well as stupid) and fast. Because each new area looks so glorious, you'll want to fight to continue the sightseeing tour.

Which is lucky, as the procession of enemies to batter is non-stop. While it's true that early foes are fodder for your blades, the ratio of cunning predators increases in Lord Bane's favour the further you go. Currently, our most despised adversary is a spectre of a Highway Man who croaks, 'Yer money or yer life', while firing off a couple of rounds. The moment you try to take his head off he vanishes into thin air. Grrr!



Looking good in that helmet young Maximo. Careful where you poke that sword, eh

This Highway Man guy is a good example of the inventiveness and humour that holds the game together. Even the most annoying enemies are goofy enough to make you laugh. Chief among them are the little white rabbits who look innocent until you take a swipe at them – at which point they transform into mutant purple bunnies with a hunger for blood! It's comedy that allows for another of Maximo's greatest 'ass-ets' – his customised kecks!

THUNDER PANTS

In the last game, the sole purpose of Maximo's underpants was to prompt the odd snicker. In Army of Zin, pants come in many magical varieties – revealing hidden treasure, boosting strength, or increasing your armour. If we had a pair that helped us pee straight we'd be happy, so Maximo must be over the moon with these.

With two difficulty levels, you're guaranteed an uphill challenge against the Army of Zin, especially if you aim to plunder all the game's secrets. The action is reassuringly samey from start to end, and your path is set in stone. Yet, the overall experience is highly polished and big on drama. There's certainly not a lot greater on the horizon for the next few months.

Despite a tight time limit, Maximo still likes to put on a show

If in doubt, roll over and release the rancid fumes of last night's curry

computer and video games VERDICT

It may look a little tired alongside the free-roaming might of Jak II, but this is still an enthralling adventure that rewards skill and dedication. **Paul**

- Some of the greatest worlds yet seen on PS2
- Simple but adaptable controls
- A stiff challenge to complete the whole game

- You do the same thing over and over
- The path the game sends you down is more linear than a pair of parallel lines

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Ratchet & Clank II (PS2), Jak II (PS2)

String combos together to earn more points and make opponents drop their Meat Buns

Xtreme Legends

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3

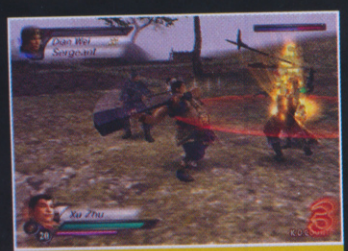
INDULGE IN THE FEUDAL ART OF WEARING FANCY COSTUMES AND IMPALING GUYS ON POINTY STICKS

GAME INFO OUT: JAN 23 COST: £24.99 PLAYERS: 1-2
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: KOEI DEV: KOEI
WWW.DW4XL.COM
REVIEWED ON PS2

When it comes to sword-slashing, spear-poking mayhem, the Dynasty Warriors saga is way ahead of the competition.

Depicting the legendary deeds of famous warriors from ancient China's Three Kingdoms, the series is famous for combining non-stop arcade action with lavish graphics and painstakingly researched historical facts. Last year's Dynasty Warriors 4 cut an impressively dashing swathe as the most complete DW game to date. Now, after riding all night on the back of a rampaging stallion, DW4: Xtreme Legends swoops down and slices DW4's head clean off, screaming, "Who's the daddy?" The King is dead, long live the King.

Equip Orbs to add Elemental effects to your Charge attacks

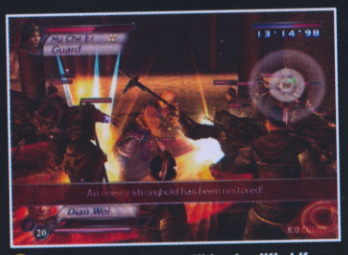


Each character has their own highly unique style of fighting

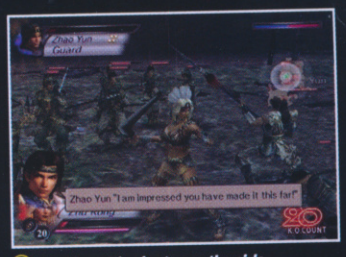
SLASH AND BURN

Xtreme Legends has the facility to upload the Musou and Free Modes from DW4, as well as previously saved data such as Officer Stats and items from your DW4 campaigns. It also plays as a standalone game, with the addition of three new modes: Xtreme, Legend and Arena Challenge. The characters and stories remain the same, but fans will be spurting because the already impressive AI has been tweaked so enemies are super-intelligent, and new Level 11 weapons let you use Orb powers without waiting for the Musou Gauge to max out. Bring on the carnage!

So it's a nicely-priced upgrade, then. Just don't expect anything different from the gameplay.



Even in Easy mode, you'll be deadified if you let your guard down for a second



Ah, bless. It's nice to see the girls getting a look-in on the battlefield

SLICED 'N' DICED

Xtreme Legends includes many of the gameplay modes from DW4, such as Challenge and Versus, but sadly the absorbing Musou Mode has been ditched.

Three new modes have been added to compensate, with Legend the most interesting, featuring bite-sized chunks of folklore depicting the exploits of each legendary warrior.

Xtreme Mode introduces the concept of random Dynasty World skirmishes

Legend Mode scenarios are a good way for beginners to learn Three Kingdoms folklore

Arena Challenge features one-on-one duels that can get a little repetitive

You can upload all the lush movies that you unlocked during DW4

Enemy commanders are hard to defeat

computer and video games VERDICT

The addition of three new modes will please the fans. Possibly a little thin as a standalone game, working best in conjunction with DW4 rather than alongside it. **Maura**

- The new Legend Mode
- Fantastically colourful characters and cutscenes add to the mythology
- Sometimes repetitive and lacking in depth
- Even the new modes feature the same gameplay style as before

7 OUT OF TEN

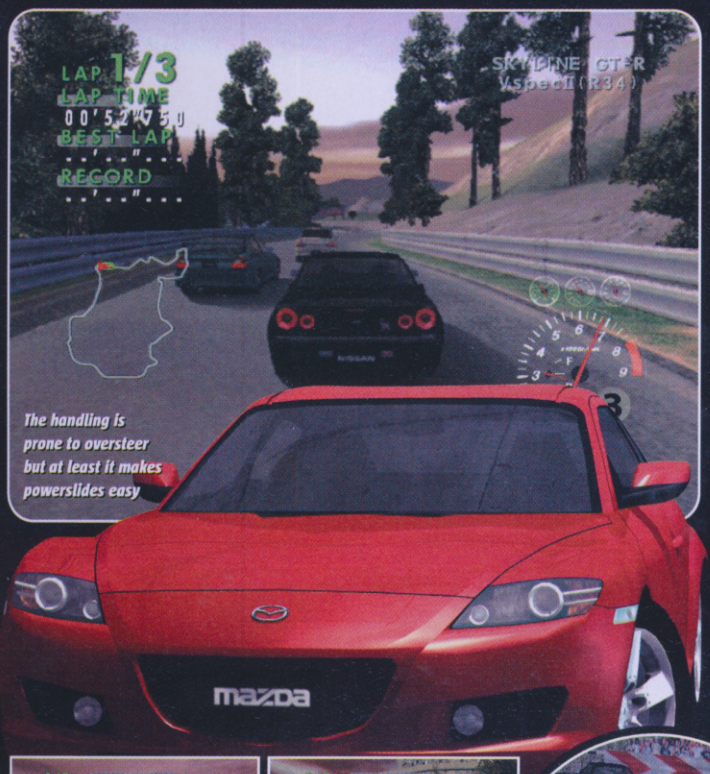
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Dynasty Warriors Tactics (PS2) Mystic Heroes (GC)

sega GT Online

GAME INFO | OUT: FEBRUARY 6 | COST: £29.99 | PLAYERS: 1-12 | PUB: SEGA | DEV: SEGA | WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM | REVIEWED ON: XBOX

GET YOUR SKINNY ASS ONLINE WITH SEGA'S RACER

One minute there's no such thing as online modes for racing games, the next they're all over your console like a leaky Chinese takeaway. And here's the latest. With GT4 stuck in the pits until the summer, it's Sega GT which is ducking into Project Gotham's slipstream in an effort to lead the pack.



The handling is prone to oversteer but at least it makes powerslides easy

CPU drivers take the racing line, but don't act like they're on rails

The bumper-cam gives you the best feeling of speed

The replays are excellent and there's loads of camera angles to caress your cars with

SOUP-UP DU JOUR

The chassis hasn't changed from Sega GT 2002 but the bodywork certainly has. There are 167 cars to collect and soup-up and the glorious history of motor racing is present as much as the cutting edge. There's an Auto Express full of retro racers, including meaty American muscle cars and even a wobbly 1934 Bugatti.

The main single-player mode, GT Garage, is where you'll stuff your collection of crotch rockets. This is definitely going down the customisation road – if you'd rather stick spanners in your eyeballs than use them to tweak an engine it'll leave you cold. But despite being a bit dull, tuning your motors to perfection makes a genuine difference to how they perform and you can use your individual set up to race online.

LOONEY TUNES

In Gotham 2 all the cars are factory-tuned – here sensible work under the bonnet can slice seconds off your lap times and embarrass opponents in more powerful motors. It's perhaps the most satisfying aspect of the solid online mode and since you can race up to eleven other cars you'll want to ensure you've got the sweetest set-up.

Like the postman delivering a gift-wrapped Cameron Diaz, Sega GT is an impressive package. Sure, it's basically an online update of the last game but you could easily argue that GT4 won't add much innovation to the series, and hardcore car fanatics may well find the depth of customisation here more appealing than Project Gotham's arcade immediacy.

Muscle cars are the coolest wheels on the track, but need some serious skills to master

"WHEN I WERE A YOUNG LAD..."

They may be old and past-it, but vintage motors in racing games are VERY trendy right now.

True to form, Sega GT features a nursing home full of classics, all gently dribbling motor oil into their underwear and eating bourbon creams.

We approve of this kind of retro – 350 bhp of pure American muscle from 1971

But you can keep this Honda from 1983. It's boxier than the Tesco cereal aisle

And surely a 1934 Bugatti is taking things a bit far. Mind you, it's skinning that Evo...

GARAGE MUSIC

This is where you do all of your tuning and ting, innit? In da garage, bo!

Looks like that old heap's going to need more than a tune-up...

Ford's awesome remake of the 1966 GT40 is one of the best cars in the game

computer and video games VERDICT

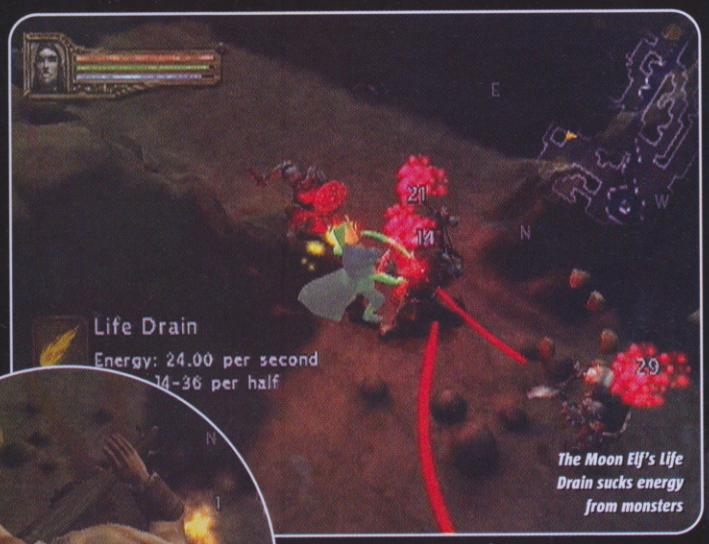
Excellent online update to a solid racer. Like a new VW it lacks the oomph of a Ferrari, but everything works and you don't have to sell your soul to buy one. **Graeme**

- ■ We love online racing!
- ■ Huge and diverse range of motors
- ■ Slightly lower price point

- ■ An update rather than a new game
- ■ Po-faced simulation stuff
- ■ Gasket-tinkering is a must

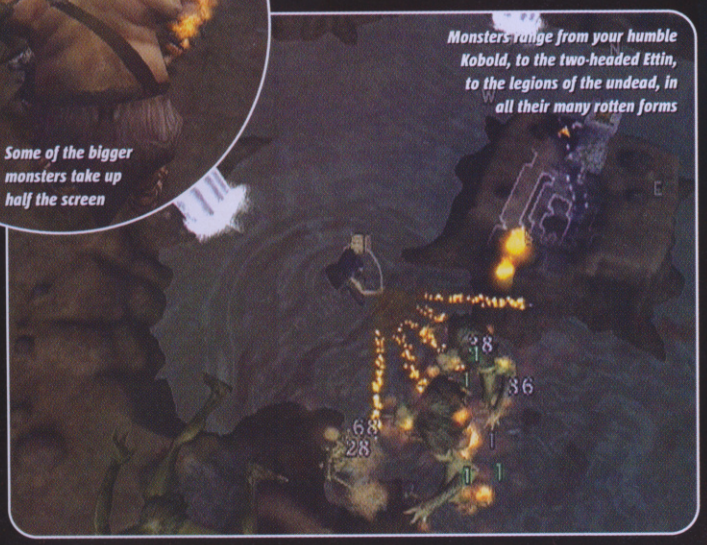
7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ■ Project Gotham Racing 2 (XB)



The Moon Elf's Life Drain sucks energy from monsters

Some of the bigger monsters take up half the screen



Monsters range from your humble Kobold, to the two-headed Ettin, to the legions of the undead, in all their many rotten forms

Forgotten Realms
Baldur's Gate
Dark Alliance II

GAME INFO | OUT: FEBRUARY 13 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-2 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: VIVENDI DEV: BLACK ISLE HTTP://BGDA2.BLACKISLE.COM/ | REVIEWED ON: PS2 | ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

IT'S NOT HIP, IT'S NOT TRENDY, AND IT PROBABLY SMELLS, BUT WE LOVE IT...

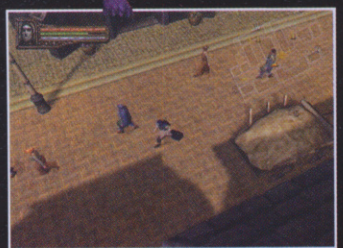
The Lord Of The Rings movies have made it cool to be into orcs, goblins and trolls. Well, as cool as it could ever be.

But nevertheless we're still almost embarrassed to like BGII so much. But this is less to do with its love of beardy wizards and goblin shamans than the fact that it's such a simple game and is so darn similar to its predecessor – which itself used a gameplay system perfected years ago with the likes of Diablo II on PC. Essentially, you run around dungeons, castles and caves, slaying hosts of fantasy beasts, until your quest is completed. Then you run round more dungeons, castles and caves fighting bigger fantasy beasties until the next quest is done.

WORKING CLASSES

For this outing, there are six all-new characters to choose from, compared to three last time. Spare a minute to decide who to be, as BGII is a different game when played as the skeleton-summoning, magic-throwing Moon Elf than it is as the

Neck potions in battle to stay alive. So make sure you've got enough in your handbag

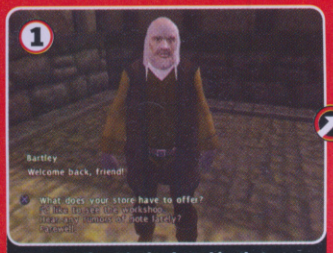


When you reach the town of Baldur's Gate you can safely stock up on medicine and stuff

FORGING AHEAD

This time round, you don't find magic weapons lying around like confetti. In fact, you hardly find them at all. Instead, you have to forge your own in the workshop in the town of Baldur's Gate.

It's a mite confusing at first, but you soon work out that you can whack on multiple amounts of different gems and stones to your favourite broadsword or halberd to turn it into the mother of all weapons.



Meet Bartley. It's thanks to him that swords, bows, helmets and shields can all be upgraded in the workshop

First buy a bunch of gems, then combine up to three types in any one item. Keep an eye on Bartley. He's naked below the waist

Each type of gem or stone confers a different power. You can use more than one of each gem for more power

It's expensive, though some characters, like the Dwarf and the Necromancer can gain powers to make it easier and cheaper

THE FELLOWSHIP

Baldur's Gate is pretty damn addictive as it is, but tear yourself away from one-player and the two-player co-operative mode makes it something really special.

If you've got a like-minded mate and the two of you have some time on your hands, playing through the game in multiplayer is an absolute treat.

You both share the same screen, so there will be arguments over which way to go next...

Experience and money is shared equally between the two, so there's a minimum of squabbling

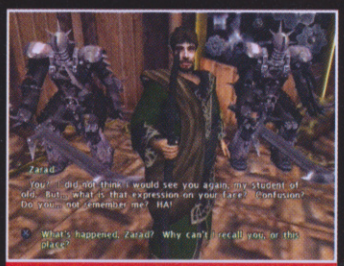
Different combinations of character classes can make a massive difference to how the game plays...

If one of you dies, the other just needs to make it to the next save point and your partner will be resurrected

New areas open up on the map as you progress, and there's lots to explore

toe-to-toe, all-axes-whirling Barbarian. Give us the Elf, any day.

Your character can swap between close combat weapons and ranged weapons at will, and one button serves to bash away at your foes until none are left standing. As the numbers opposing you swell, and their powers increase, the fights become great clashes of magic and metal, with you unleashing all manner of lightening strikes, fireballs, death rays and protection spells, while poison arrows, magic missiles, acid spit and boulders rain down on you. It gets manic, and health and mana potions are consumed in Herculean quantities. But it's fun.



There's a bit of reading and a convoluted plot which isn't up to much

Each character's fighting style is massively different

As you enter each new area, you have to work out how best to confront the type of beast inhabiting it, with your character class making a massive difference. Against the undead, for example, the Cleric can always call upon the 'repel undead' spell, which makes her practically unbeatable. For the crossbow-specialising Dwarf, however, skeletons are a nightmare as arrows and bolts hardly harm their bony forms. Instead, he'll have to resort to his primitive grenades, and maybe a mighty bone-smashing mace for the close quarters stuff.

Battles are bloody and, of course, fiery. Ouch

If you need to stare death in the face you can – just zoom in a little for extra detail

MAGICAL VIEW

The visuals are hardly groundbreaking, but they don't need to be. From top-down view (you can rotate as much as you like, and zoom in or out a small amount) the animations look smooth, the surfaces solid. And the many magic, water, fire and lighting effects work wonders.

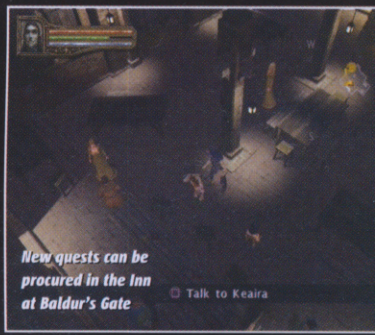
What propels you along and makes the game so fiendishly addictive is that simple lure of the RPG levelling-up system. Expanding the massive range of powers open to each character can keep you going through the night, as you wait to see how your new Death Blow power will make mincemeat of those previously hardcore hobgoblins. It really is nothing new, but it's amazing after all these years how much satisfaction you can get by increasing your Dwarf's charisma levels to a point where children no longer run screaming at the sight of him.

Baldur's Gate Dark Alliance II is a God's honest case of what-you-see-is-what-you-get. It's a hack 'n' slash combat-heavy RPG using all those old classic Dungeons & Dragons clichés. But the amazing thing is how it's got even some of us who never usually go near RPGs gripped in its mighty gauntlets.

Fall off these edges and you're a gonner

Christ, you're under attack from a comedy Disney witch

Search every nook and cranny for loot



New quests can be procured in the Inn at Baldur's Gate

games VERDICT

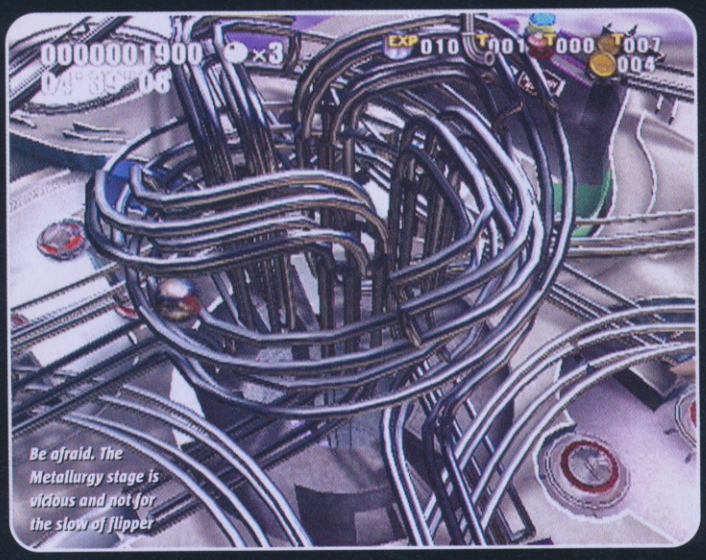
BGII has got all the fun of a classic arcade game coupled with the intricate magic and levelling-up systems of a hardcore RPG. It's easy to play, but hard to put down – the magic formula. **Steve O**

- Simple, fun combat system
- Loads of powers and skills to upgrade
- Replayability with the many characters
- Old-fashioned gameplay
- Very similar to the last one

8 OUT OF TEN

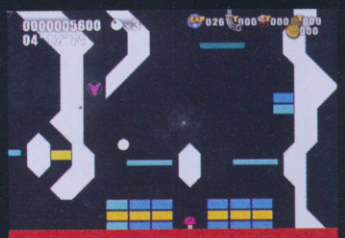
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance (PS2)

FLIPNIC



Be afraid. The Metallurgy stage is vicious and not for the slow of flipper

The Optics table is like something from the inside of an insane super computer



The Geometry level kicks it old-skool with Breakout-style pinballing

Two-player games include this awesome table football game with bumpers instead of men

GAME INFO

OUT: JANUARY 23 COST: £19.99 PLAYERS: 1-2

PUB: UBISOFT DEV: SONY
WWW.PLAYSTATION.JP/SCEJ/TITLE/FLIPNIC

REVIEWED ON PS2

WHEN PINBALL STRIKES BACK!

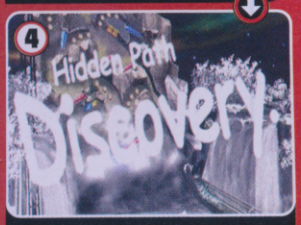
Where traditional pinball is all about points, Flipnic is more focused on completing missions.

Challenges can be as simple as smashing targets in a set time, to those as complex and convoluted as the 'Freeze Over' mission on the Biology stage. Buff your balls in readiness...

To begin the challenge, pummel these bumpers to call butterflies but avoid the chameleon

If successful, a cutscene shows you you've triggered the mission

The main area is now frozen. Smash the ball against the frozen waterfall three times



Do it fast and the frozen water shatters, revealing a secret path

Now hammer the ball up the high-speed flipper section to collect all the coins and beat the challenge

You control bumpers as well as flippers with your button presses so watch your timing

THIS 'BALLER WILL FLIP YOUR HEAD AND TWIST YOUR NIC-ERS

There's a kind of insanity where you don't recognise your own hand and it starts moving independently of your body, feeling up ladies (or scarier, fellas) in the street without you having any control.

Hopefully you won't experience this, or any other sort of craziness in your lifetime. But if you're curious to see what it's like, get yourself a copy of Flipnic.

It's the first truly 3D pinball game ever, where 'tables' are entire stages split into wildly themed areas with multiple missions, linked by looping gullies and existing at impossible angles from each other. It's also one of the most intricately and ingeniously designed pinball/puzzle games out there. The thing is, it's off its flipping head.

FRESHLY WAXED BALLS

From the bizarre presentation that includes cigar-smoking death heads, neon-lit sheriffs and insectoid alien craft, to the level design and mission challenges themselves, Flipnic is so leftfield it's in danger of being carted away foaming at the mouth-hole.

The presentation is completely off the wall throughout. Fetch the sanity pills

It's the general weirdness that helps the game work so well. The strange laid-back soundtrack and intense flipper flapping action, combined with the hypnotic camera swooshes and special effects, make for one of the most unusual and 'grab-you-by-the-happysack' addictive games in ages. It's strangeness will scare blinkered gamers, but if you like things a bit more challenging – in terms of both difficulty level and concept – you'll find loads to enjoy here. CVG

SPACE ODDITY

Halt the evolution of amorphous space beasts!

Destroy waves of invading alien craft! Flipnic is frickin' mental and you're guaranteed to see things in it you've probably never seen in a game before, especially fighting the boss creations.

The world is free from angry flamingo attack once more

Eat my shiny balls, scary giant space monster!

Sections of the same stage are connected by a tangled web of ball lanes and gulleys

Games VERDICT

This is easily the pinball pinnacle. The laid-back, but intensely odd approach is dead unusual and refreshing too, and it's cheap. What more could you bozos want? **Lee**

- The first proper 3D pinball game
- Insanely addictive just-one-more-go gameplay
- Weird but cool two-player games

- If you hate pinball then forget it
- Concept may be too bizarre for some
- Can be too frustrating

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Sonic Pinball Party (GBA)

nationalleague

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3

GAME | computer and video GAMES | KONAMI

TIME IS RUNNING OUT...

THE CLOCK IS TICKING. YOU ONLY HAVE UNTIL THE END OF JANUARY TO REGISTER FOR THE PES3 NATIONAL LEAGUE.

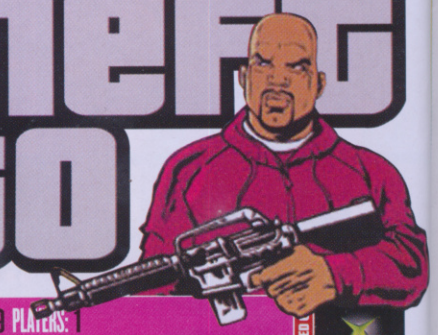
Places are strictly limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis so you must register quickly to stand a chance of making it. Good luck!

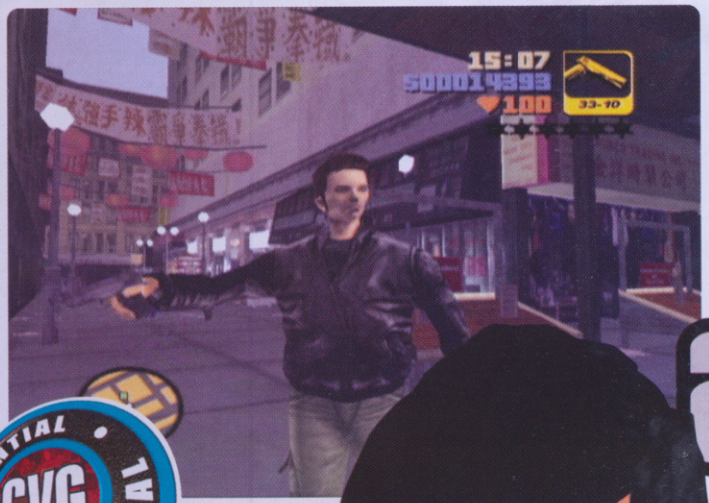
STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS! NORTH EASTERN LEAGUE NOW ADDED!

Due to overwhelming demand, we have now added our tenth league to the roster – the North Eastern League – located in Newcastle. Registration for this division is now open, so get in quickly if you want to be a part of it. If you live in the North East, but have already registered to another league, then check the website www.pesleague.co.uk for information on transferring to the new venue.

VISIT WWW.PESLEAGUE.CO.UK TODAY TO REGISTER!

grand theft auto





Quit posing. We all know guns make you look cool

Trigger hidden 'rampage' missions and slay enemies in strict time limits

Gives new meaning to 'going clubbing'

GAME INFO OUT: NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: ROCKSTAR GAMES DEV: ROCKSTAR NORTH
WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/GRANDTHEFTAUTO
REVIEWED ON XBOX

DOUBLE YOUR PLEASURE WITH ONE IN THE EYE FOR PS2 OWNERS

Murder, arson, shagging your skank ho then shooting her in the back of the head to take your money back. The world of Grand Theft Auto is a filthy revelation. GTA III, the first 3D GTA title, seemingly came from nowhere and shattered the action game mould. Other games wanted to be it, players wanted to live inside it. The sequel Vice City is something more and an impossibly successful international phenomenon.

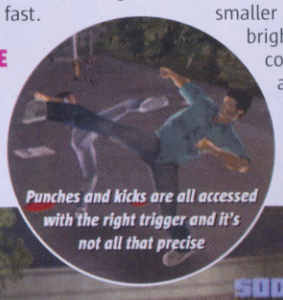
Up until now, PS2 owners have been able to offset criticism of their ageing machine with the simple fact that they've got GTA and no one else has. Now that both games are available in a stunning double pack on Xbox, they're going to need something new to shout about and fast.

PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED

It's likely you already know lots about the Grand Theft Auto world. GTA III is a modern day excursion into the grimy, grubby criminal underbelly of New York-style Liberty City. Vice City is a leap forward in gameplay and a step back in time to the early Eighties and a shimmering neon-lit Miami-influenced playground.

Both games give you an entire city to rampage through. You start by performing monkey jobs for crime bosses and, in time, start to make a name for yourself. But the beauty of GTA is that in between the missions you can do what the hell you want. Fancy blatting dirty prossies about the streets with a baseball bat? Go ahead. Want to explore back streets on foot for secret missions and challenges? Bingo.

There are of course differences between the two games. GTA III is smaller and grittier. Vice is brighter and slightly more comedic, with the added ability of entering buildings, two-wheeled vehicles, buying property and flying aircraft. But the glue



Punches and kicks are all accessed with the right trigger and it's not all that precise

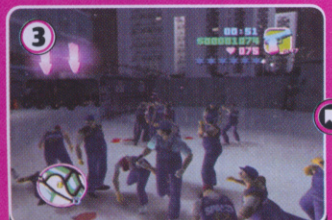
The pimps may wear purple, but they're not pansies. Kill or be killed

LIFE, OR SOMETHING LIKE IT

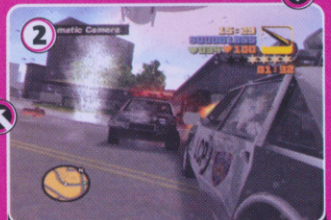
Yeah it's violent and cruel, but here's something to shut your granny up: GTA's not real! The police forces of Vice City and Liberty City are forgetful and easily fooled. Locals walk around like mute automatons waiting for you to beat them and rob their cash.

The lack of 'real world' settings and 'realistic' behaviour means the two cities in GTA feel more like playgrounds for you to muck about in, rather than the accurately mapped but actually pretty boring 200 square kilometres of LA seen in True Crime. It's a perfect mix of realism and fun...

Gravity? Pah! You can still reach secret areas and perform stunts for cash



Do things you always wanted to, like start a riot, then mow down the rioters



It may not be real-life but it IS consistent. Quick, murder some more whores

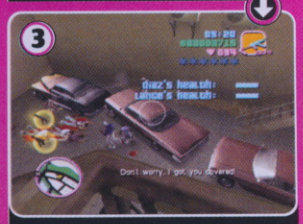
MULTI-TASKING CRIME LORDS

It's fair to say there's a lot of errand running and being other gangsters' bitch in both GTA games. Still, when the errands in question involve clubbing golfers to death and planting car bombs on unsuspecting goons' jalopies you're not gonna be complaining.

Both titles are packed with ingenious missions and challenges beyond the usual driving, running and shooting.

Steal a taxi and earn some extra cash ferrying passengers around town

Steal the car, plant the bomb and then return it unscratched



Take up your position and snipe your way to the top of the food chain

Use the remote control chopper to plant bombs in the site. Wick!

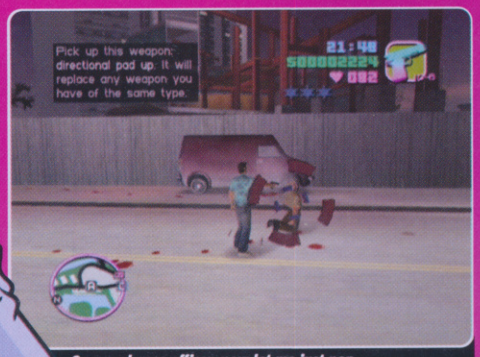
holding the two titles together is blood. Rivers of it. Gushing fountains of it pluming from the capped heads of rival gang members. Both games are unapologetically adult and dangerously addictive. Taken together they form not just the most entertaining Xbox package available, but also a fundamental slice of videogaming history. Simply then: Grand Theft Auto Double Pack is the most essential Xbox game since Halo. And that's saying something.

No time to aim, either run away or shoot blindly in the hope of capping him

POLICE BRUTALITY!

Your 'wanted' level is represented by the sheriff's badges on screen. The higher the rating, the more extreme the police force sent after you.

Our favourite is the SWAT team that descends on ropes. Killing cops is the surest way to increase your wanted level and go straight to hell. It's fun too, but don't tell our probation officer we said so.



On your knees officer, now let me just pop your head open with this bullet

Not content with running police down in their own car, you can bash them with bats

Use the car crusher to destroy vehicular evidence and live on easy street

GTA III features the top down view from the original games

Explosions in front and burly builders behind will test your patience

Rescue the injured geezer on the beach and take him to hospital to win cash

Hop into the truck and look for fire to douse

computer and video games VERDICT

Probably the best game bundle in the world. Two historical, gob-smacking games in one mean package. You can't call yourself a gamer unless you own this. **Lee**

- Two of the best games ever in one pack
- Incredible blend of driving and shooting
- Bloody, violent and unashamedly adult
- Graphics compared with newer Xbox games
- You risk losing your job and girlfriend
- The imprecise fighting is a tiny bit whiffy

10 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... True Crime: Streets Of LA (PS2/Xb/GC)

ROGUE OPS

Throwing star vs gun = bad move, Nikki

GAME INFO OUT: FEBRUARY 6 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: KEMCO DEV: BITS STUDIO
WWW.ROGUEOPS.COM
REVIEWED ON: PS2
ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

MAKE WAY FOR THE REAL ATTACK OF THE CLONES

Went drinking with Dr Frankenstein once. Ended up legless, but we did dream up the ultimate superhuman: Zidane's feet, J-Lo's batty, Lara's baps, Snake's most solid tool (yes, his Codec), and Nightmare's big chopper. It'd look monstrous, but like Rogue Ops would borrow so many bits that everyone'd find at least one feature to like.

Sometimes fun and engaging as it is, so much about Kemco's stealth actioner feels like you've seen it somewhere else. As Nicola Connors, ex-green beret hardnut turned revenging agent working for covert anti-terrorism agency Phoenix (here we go again...), you have to ninjitsu and bullet evil Omega 19's minions to death in a utility belt-ful of creative and sneaky ways. That and pick your way through security systems tighter than a The Darkness jumpsuit.

At your disposal are a bunch of sneakage moves and gadgetry made famous by the likes of MGS and Splinter Cell. You can cling to walls, hide in shadows, duck under cameras, hide bodies in lockers, hang off and shimmy along ledges, use silent kill weapons, headset comms updating missions and invisible underwear.

Okay, we made that last bit up, but no matter how far you bend your heroine over you'll never see the flimsiest hint of G-string. Maybe she goes commando.

NO TO CHOCOBO

Anyway, even the supposedly new and innovative stuff comes off a bit stale: stealing up behind NPCs to pick pockets has been in RPGs for eons, Perfect Dark had a flying spy camera and the irritating Silent Kill skill (which involves tapping buttons in the right order against the clock, combo style) has been taken from games like Final Fantasy 10 – and was best left there.

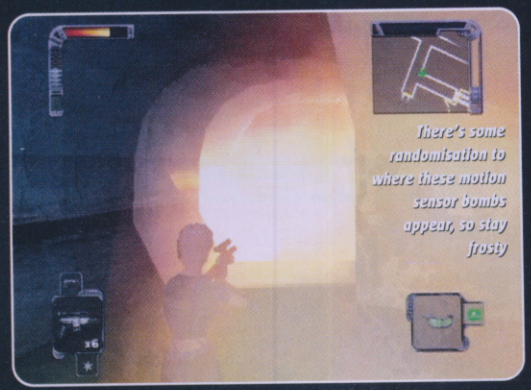
Your tough-girl attitude and relationship with your Phoenix minders is all very Nikita too (everyone even calls you Nikki), and her original character model was so close to Angel Of Darkness's stealthy Lara look that Bits 'Don't Mention Die Hard Vendetta' Studio had to dye her hair blonde at the eleventh hour.

We could go on, but the point is that despite – or perhaps because of – all these borrowed bits, Rogue Ops is dead easy to get stuck into, and is part satisfying and fun plus part derivative and tired. Yeah, it does little that's truly new and you can pretty much guarantee if something's in the game it's there for a reason. But providing you're okay with that, just sit back and enjoy the ride... for a bit at least.

FRUSTRATION CREATION

Sure as you'll find a feature you loved in another game borrowed here is the certainty that something else about

X-RAY SPEC-SY


There's some randomisation to where these motion sensor bombs appear, so stay frosty

Timed sections inject a much needed bit of pace into the action

Also unsurprisingly, lighting and effects look prettier on Xbox than here on PS2, as do Nikki's pert cheeks

Music and sounds do their job well, building up the atmosphere – though some effects are a bit tinny

WIKKID NIKKI

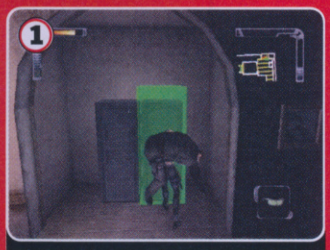
No self-respecting agent goes anywhere without hi-tech gadgetry to die for – and Nikki's no exception...

As you'd expect, the gear get steadily cooler as you go. Flying camera anyone?

This silenced sniper rifle has a decent zoom on it

SNEAK WEEK

If you like stealthy action adventures, Rogue Ops certainly ticks a lot of boxes, but like an average student taking a multiple choice test, doesn't always put 'em in the right place...



The top right bar tells you if you're hidden, but other times crouch one polygon out of a corner and you'll be detected. Argh

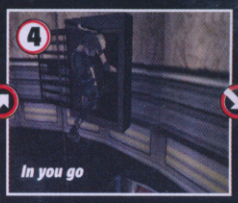
In training you're taught to shoot out security cameras, yet in some of the early missions the alarm goes off if you try it

Even the terrorists couldn't help Zzz-ing off at the plot

Finally found you...

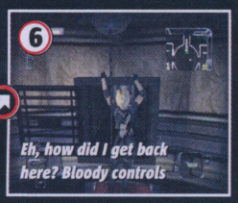
Up you go

Open the hatch



In you go

Into the air duct



Eh, how did I get back here? Bloody controls

Rogue Ops will begin to bug you pretty sharpish. It could be something minor like the fact that the cool looking X-ray specs add little to the gameplay over similar gadgets found elsewhere (find batteries, scope ahead, edge round corners to shoot unsuspecting guards).

Or that you're choppered into an enemy compound 20 yards from the boss who doesn't hear a thing. The environments are also mostly static and most objects are locked down and indestructible. And how come a security turret can pummel off 50,000 rounds yet will stand down if you hide for a few seconds? Then there's the schizo difficulty – one minute it's utterly predictable find-keycard-to-open-door stuff, the next it's frustrating, bordering on rock hard.

GIMP SUIT

What really gets more irritating than an itchy butt-crack in a gimp suit is the half-arsed way Nikki interacts with certain objects and scenery. You start out hoping she can climb and swing all over the place but soon realise what she can use is far more limited.

Sometimes you find yourself endlessly switching in and out of first-person mode, looking for one usuable part of the scenery to progress. One hour later you realise you didn't look at the right polygon on the ceiling to place your grappling hook. Gargh!

Make no mistake. It's not as stylish as MGS or Splinter Cell, and their sequels will wazz all over Nikki; it's unpolished and will irritate you in places; plus it's less than the sum of its borrowed parts. But Rogue Ops has the body of a fairly decent game – it's just an bunch of cack organs make it all go a bit mental sometimes. But then again, Frankenstein's monster always was a few nuts short of a full tool set. CVG

TRICKY NIKKI MAKES US SICKIE

RETARDED RUNNING

Having to press another button after selecting a change of weapon on the D-pad costs vital milliseconds in a fight. Annoying

...but not as much as being forced to move like a slug on Mogadon when your weapon's drawn. Must. Kill. Pad

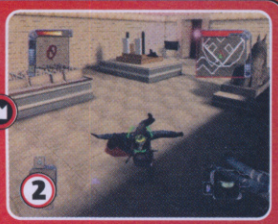
...which gets even more annoying when enemies like this boss keep moving and you have to constantly find cover

Other times Nikki feels so light to control she just about floats, making interacting with some stuff unnecessarily fiddly

ILLOGICAL, SCROTE-Y

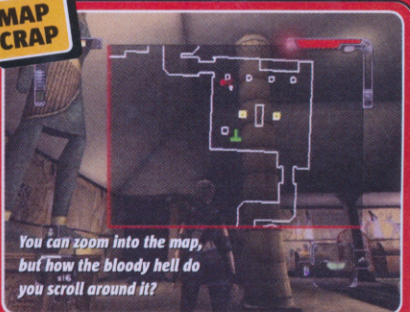
Early on you must steal a historic statue from a British Museum to get the Uzbeki's to help the agency...

...you can't hurt anyone (even if their accents stink), or even be seen. So how come you start with a gun?



Kill heavily armed guard, search his body, find nothing. Er, what happened to that gun he had earlier?

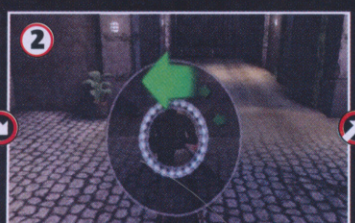
MAP CRAP

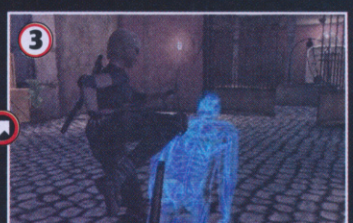


You can zoom into the map, but how the bloody hell do you scroll around it?

EXTRA STUPID PERCEPTION

WTF is that? Sometimes you need ESP to work how to use some bits of equipment





This combo style stealth kill feels out of place – as if not getting caught sneaking up wasn't enough. It's not like you're short on silenced rounds either

computer and video games VERDICT

Nikki's taken so many tips from Snake and Sam she's got stealth clap. She's your best mate's sister: fun, but go all the way once and like a used rubber you'll never put it on again. **Pete**

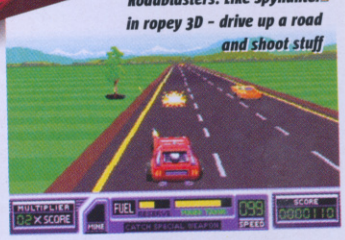
- Nikki's batty is pure peaches
- She's so stealthy even her shadow wears camoflage
- Schizoid learning curve
- A predictable, unpolished clone
- Sometimes pad-mashingly frustrating

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Splinter Cell (PS2/Xbox/PC) MGS2 (PS2/Xbox)

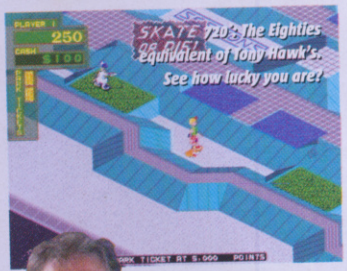
midway arcade treasures

Marble Madness: Brings back such fond memories we pissed ourselves


Roadblasters: Like Spyhunter in ropey 3D – drive up a road and shoot stuff

GAME INFO OUT: FEBRUARY COST: £14.99 PLAYERS: 1-2
PUB: MIDWAY DEV: MIDWAY
WWW.MIDWAY.COM
REVIEWED ON: PS2 ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX

Old-school Gran Turismo with crazy tracks and wee cars

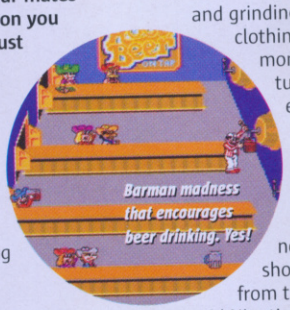

SKATE 720: The Eighties equivalent of Tony Hawk's. See how lucky you are!

VIDEOGAME GRANNY GRABBING FOR THOSE WITH 'MATURE' TASTES

Let's be honest. If your mates walked in on you playing Joust in scabby old 1984 shit-o-vision they'd think you were the biggest nobhead on the planet.

"But I'm simply expanding my horizons by investigating videogaming's glorious past," you'd protest.

"Bugger that you absolute scrotum," they'd scream. "Stick on Need For Speed Underground or we'll batter you until you bleed jobbie."


Barman madness that encourages beer drinking. Yes!

Not that we don't approve of retro stuff. Girls Aloud bumping and grinding in skimpy Eighties' clothing – excellent. Simple, monotonous games with turdy graphics – not so excellent. It's a lovely idea, but at the end of the day it's about as exciting as Songs Of Praise.

All the same, for 15 notes you get a charity shop full of vintage classics from the early Eighties to the mid-Nineties. There are some solid gold legends included like Defender and Robotron 2040, and some later gems like Smash TV, and erm, Toobin'.

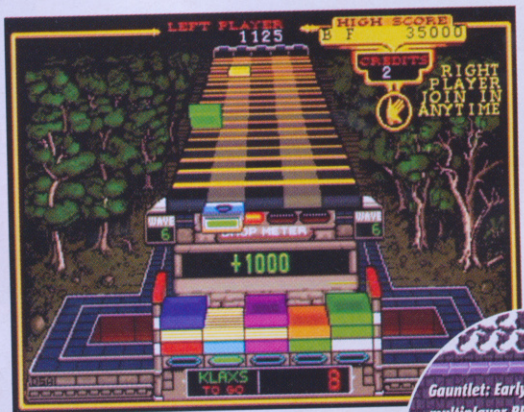
GRANNY RECOMMENDS: SMASH TV

"You can stick yer Manhunts up yer arse – Smash TV came out when I was just a nipper and it had more blood, gore and senseless violence than any of your new-fangled tripe. And that lovely Mutoid Man, too. Fancy a cuppa?"

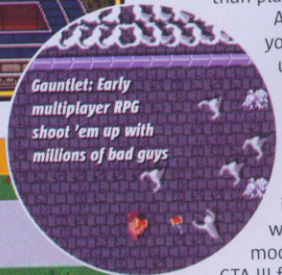
"Tut-tut. Look at all those nasty men"

"Eyeball and severed limb! It's filth. Lovely"

"There he is, Mutoid Man. He's a big one, always needed a good beating off, he did. Don't get me wrong, like..."


Klax: Puzzler that once ruled the world

The definitive paper round simulator. Intense paper-delivering action


Gauntlet: Early multiplayer RPG shoot 'em up with millions of bad guys

Of course, if you couldn't give a dog's egg about retro games then you'd probably rather eat your own arsehole than play these.

And we can't blame you. These games were undoubtedly wicked when they came out, but that was bloody ages ago. We admire the idea, but even at this knockdown price it's hard to recommend when you can pick up a modern masterpiece like GTA III for an extra fiver. CVG

GRANNY RECOMMENDS: RAMPAGE

"When the war was on and my husband was away on duty I'd get whichever young fella I was scrumping back to the house and we'd play a lovely game of Rampage.

"Battering helpless buildings with a monkey – you don't see that nowadays. Don't leave me, I'm all alone..."

"I remember it was one of the first games where you played the baddie. Lovely"

"Go on monkey! Reminds me of the Blitz. Now that was a good game"

"Look, he's eating an army man. Brings back memories, that. Lovely"

computer and video games VERDICT

Cheaper than a homeless clown and twice as cheerful, but just as scabby. Absolutely fantastic if you're a retro gaming gravedigger; otherwise let these rest in peace. **Graeme**

- If you remember the games it's cool
- Some old school corkers...
- ...and some influential beauties

- It's just old games, innit?
- So the graphics are mince...
- ...and the gameplay is repetitive

5 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Sega Arcade Gallery (GBA)

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GAMECUBE™
www.nintendo.co.uk

Millions will find salvation
in this droplet.

"Final Fantasy makes a triumphant return to Nintendo in a totally new breed of game" NGC

FINAL FANTASY CRYSTAL CHRONICLES™

COMING MARCH

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The playing fields all have cool touches, like this huge neon sign above the endzone

The playing fields all have cool touches, like this huge neon sign above the endzone

Finish off a blazing rush into the endzone with a stylin' dive for thousands of points

Some of the big tackles are so hardcore that you'll have concussion for a week

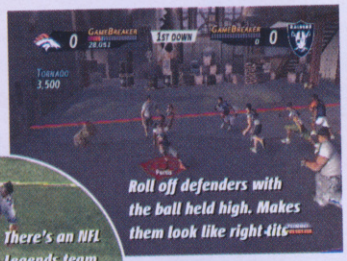
NFL STREET

GAME INFO | OUT: JANUARY 30 | COST: £39.99 | PLAYERS: 1-4 | ONLINE GAMING | PUB: ELECTRONIC ARTS BIG | DEV: ELECTRONIC ARTS TIBURON | WWW.NFLSTREET.COM | REVIEWED ON: PS2 | ALSO AVAILABLE: XBOX, CUBE

EA ROCKS YOUR BLOCK WITH AMERICAN FOOTBALL STRAIGHT FROM THE STREET

Cheerleaders. If you need one reason why American football rules, it's got to be cheerleaders, innit?

Sadly, NFL Street doesn't have cheerleaders. Neither does it have any shiny stadiums, fancy outfits, outrageously complicated rules or frustrating delays between the skull-cracking. Nah, NFL Street is hardcore, balls-out, trash-talking, block-rocking football, and we love it.

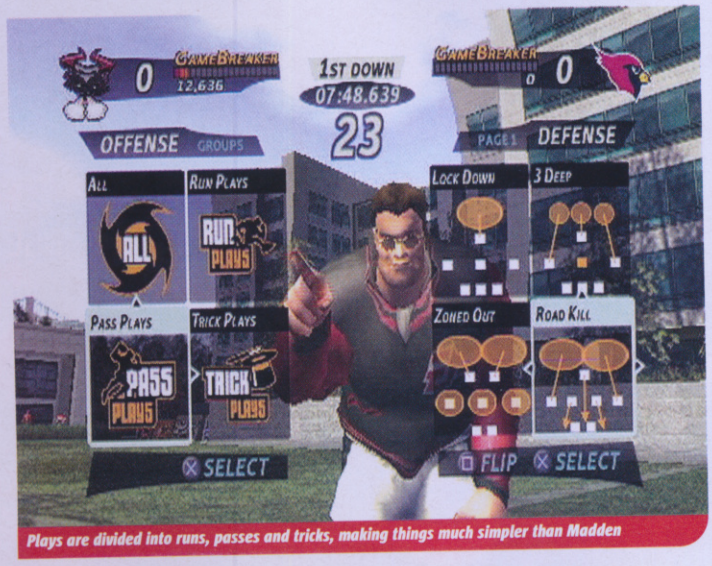


Roll off defenders with the ball held high. Makes them look like right 4-lits

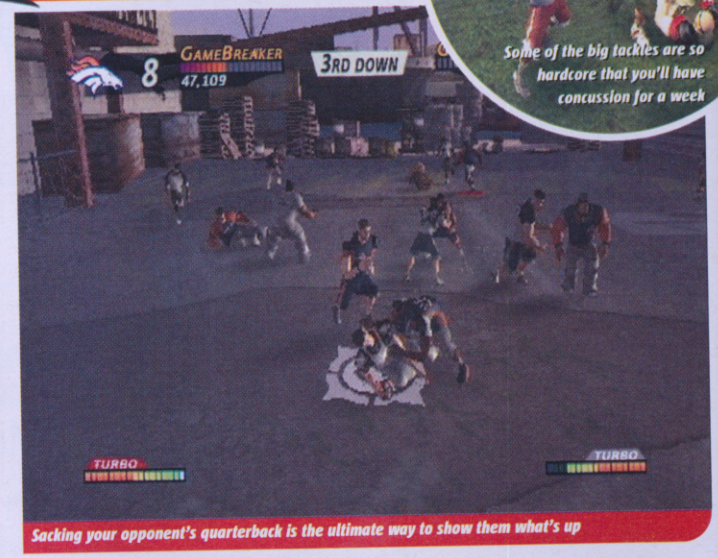
There's an NFL Legends team to unlock. Bring your best game or you'll get creamed like this

RULES OF THE GAME

NBA Street took basketball superstars off the hardwood and onto the blacktop. NFL Street follows the same principle. You can play pick-up games with the hottest stars in the sport or develop your own team of street brawlers and face-off across the country. You'll line up on beaches, ghetto courtyards and warehouses but the gameplay remains the same. Bring it strong, bring it with style, or don't bring it at all. Got it?



Plays are divided into runs, passes and tricks, making things much simpler than Madden



Sacking your opponent's quarterback is the ultimate way to show them what's up

TAKE ONE FOR THE TEAM

Street's NFL Challenge mode saves the game from getting repetitive.

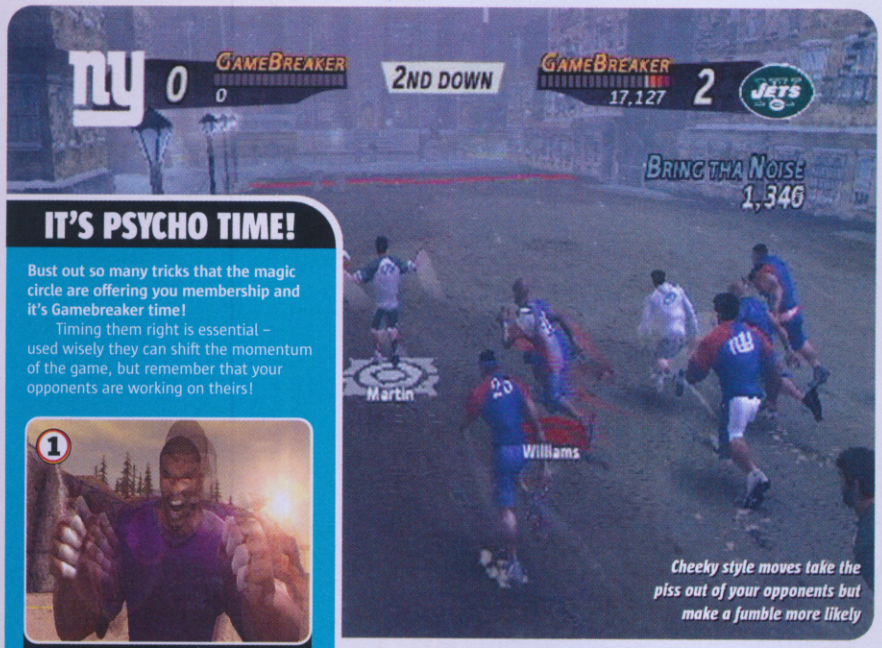
You choose a team name, logo and colour scheme, then take on challenges and competitions to develop your players. It teaches you the different moves and encourages you to develop your playing style.

Make like a twat-haired graphic artist who's being paid a mint to design a cool logo and choose the team colours

Next you you can enhance your player's attributes with development points as well as changing their gear

Or hey, why bother training up your own guys when you can just just poach NFL superstars for instant skillz

Whatever. Once you've assembled your squad, you can tour your playas across the country taking teams to school!



Cheeky style moves take the piss out of your opponents but make a fumble more likely

IT'S PSYCHO TIME!

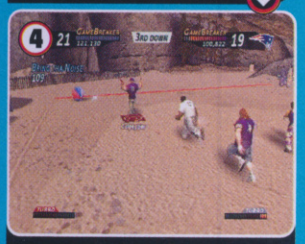
Bust out so many tricks that the magic circle are offering you membership and it's Gamebreaker time!

Timing them right is essential – used wisely they can shift the momentum of the game, but remember that your opponents are working on theirs!

Unleash the Gamebreaker and your players turn into mentalists

The sky turns grey and your opponent's pants turn brown

...So you can batter through the defence line and fumble...



...And then run it into the endzone for the quick six! Game over, baby!

"How you like that?" Complete a big play and your players will show off for the cameras

FREESTYLIN'

All the conventional American footy moves are included on here, but hold the left shoulder button and you'll light the field up with some sweet style moves. Heading for an easy touchdown? Why not take the piss a bit by offering your trailing pursuers the ball? Not only will you infuriate them but you'll look cool into the bargain.

There are loads of different moves to inject every part of your game with some serious street style. Chaining them together builds up a meter, and once that's maxed-out you can unleash your Gamebreaker.

The New York stage is played on a snowy courtyard. Watch your footing!

THIRD AND WHAT?

Don't worry if you don't understand American football.

NFL Street strips the sport to the bone – it's 14 men, one ball, and one gigantic can of whup-ass just waiting to be opened. It's streamlined, non-stop action, letting you concentrate on cracking skulls.

You get four attempts, or 'downs', to move the ball then you get another four

Running the ball is a safer way to get the first down, but you stop when you're tackled

Wait until your receiver gets free from defensive coverage and he'll have more chance of making the catch

Passing the ball risks interception but can pick up yards quickly. Those lines are your player's pass routes

A quick juke to the left and he'll be able to slam into the endzone. Touchdown!

BREAKIN' IT DOWN

In defence your players will tackle like angry lions, forcing the opponents to cough up the ball and often leading to a quick touchdown. On offence you'll make roadkill out of defenders as you streak into the endzone.

They can turn the game around in a second, but we're disappointed that they don't look as cool as they did in NBA Street. Some sweet bullet-time passing or runs that caused earthquakes would have been awesome.

You can pull off style throws with your quarterback, like this behind-the-back pass

YO! BUMRUSH THE SHOW

Other than that dropped ball, NFL Street hits freakin' hard. Tackles shake the screen, shudder the joypad and cause splintering sound effects to snap, crackle and pop out of the speakers. Getting bumrushed by an opposing defence feels like that fat bird from Pop Idol sitting on your head.

In fact, it's so hard-hitting that even if you hate the idea of the sport, NFL Street will batter you into squealing submission. Okay, so there's no cheerleaders, but when the action's this cool who gives a crap?

Games VERDICT

Keeps it raw, keeps it real, keeps it rough as ghetto pavement. American football stripped of all the padding and left a solid mass of granite gameplay muscle. We like. **Graeme**

- Huge hits and bone-cracking tackles
- Showboat with dope style moves
- Accessible for American football novices

- Disappointing Gamebreakers
- Tries to be a bit too cool
- A couple of the play areas are boring

8 OUT OF TEN

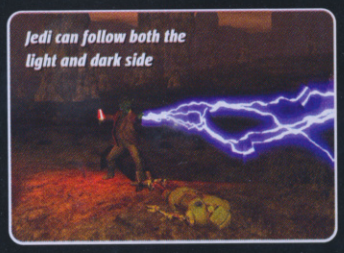
IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... ESPN NFL Football (PS2, XB)

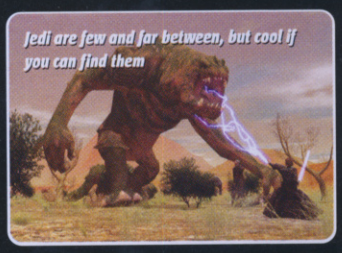
STAR WARS GALAXIES

AN EMPIRE DIVIDED™

The main cities tend to attract the most players

Creature handlers can raise, train and sell mounts for a hand-rubbing profit





GAME INFO OUT: OUT NOW COST: £34.99 PLAYERS: THOUSANDS (ONLINE) REVIEWED ON: PC CD ROM

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: ACTIVISION/LUCASARTS DEV: SONY
WWW.STARWARSGALAXIES.STATION.SONY.COM

IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY, EVERYONE'S GOT BROADBAND

If you're a true Star Wars fan then for you this is surely the game you've been dreaming about ever since you first saw Luke get cocky with Han Solo: thousands of players, all running around the deserts of Tatooine, the forests of Endor and the, er, swamps of Naboo, fighting stormtroopers, blowing up Death Stars and generally being all cool and Jedi-like. Unfortunately, that's clearly not the same dream Sony had, because Star Wars Galaxies doesn't quite live up to the hype.

WEAK OLD MAN

Not that SWG is utter shite. The Star Wars worlds are beautiful (as long as you've got a powerful PC and a quick net connection), the thousands of fellow human players are helpful, friendly and generous, and the gameplay is balanced. But it just doesn't feel much like Star Wars. There are no Jedi haring about, hacking off limbs in bar-fights and saving the universe (well, precious few anyway). There are no epic space battles with fat guys with dodgy taches called Porkins. It is, at the end of the day, just a plain old MMORPG wearing Star Wars clothes to help it sell.

So, if it's an epic Star Wars role-playing experience you really want, go and buy Knights Of The Old Republic quick. SWG is a fine online role-player, to be sure. It'll last for ages, there's plenty to do and it looks lovely. It's just a bit too far far away from your dream Star Wars game. TW

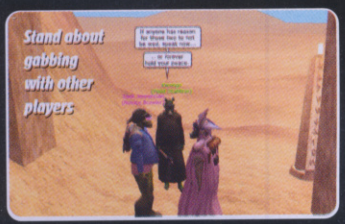
FIGHT THE POWER

Being Star Wars, naturally there's a bit of a barney going on between the Imperial forces (Vader's Vile Villains) and the Rebels (Lucky Luke's Lads).

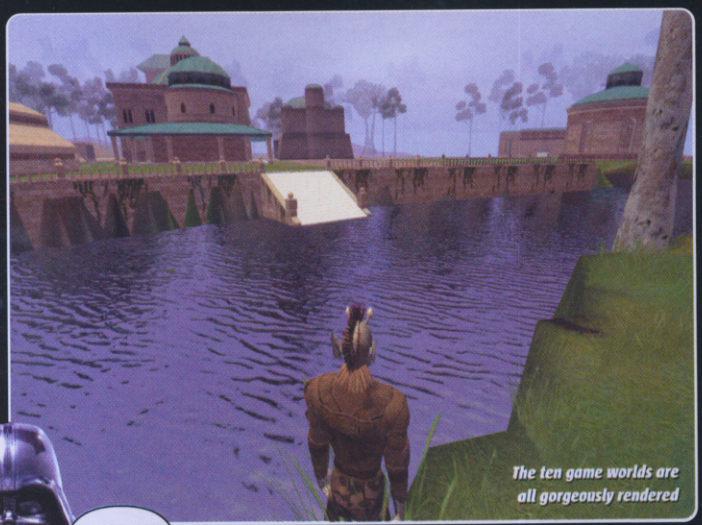
In the game this means you get to run missions for one side or the other, earning Faction Points. Also, you get to shoot at players who have chosen the opposing side to yours.

Rebel scum. Oops, looks like old Darth's a wee bit miffed

Running missions for the rebels is dangerous, but rewarding



Jesus, what's the unearth stink-up? Is someone barbecuing meat?



The ten game worlds are all gorgeously rendered

Droids have to be built and sold by special classes

computer and video games VERDICT

Truthfully it's not much different to any other MMORPG currently out there, it's just got the Star Wars skin on top of it all. Still a lot of fun with the right players, though. **Paul**

- Gorgeous recreation of Star Wars worlds
- Plenty of skills to learn
- Friendly online community

- Needs a very powerful PC to run properly
- Not the most epic Star Wars experience
- No space battles

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Knights Of The Old Republic (PC, Xbox)

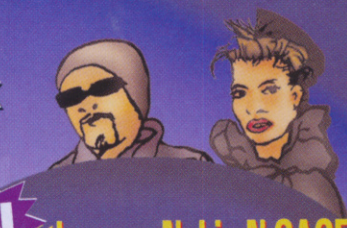
Cool stuff for cool mobiles 09066 416250 uk

Ringtones & Polyphonics

Regular Ringtones for: Nokia - Samsung - Motorola - Siemens - Sagem
Polyphonics for: Nokia - Samsung - Sharp - Sagem - Panasonic - Sony Ericsson - Motorola - Siemens

SHUT UP - black eyed peas	113123	I'M LOVING IT - justin timberlake	113280	DESIRE - holly valance	113332
GOT YOUR NUMBER (118) - young punx	113390	IT TAKES TWO - fatman scoop	113302	YOU USED TO - richard x and javine	113355
CRY LITTLE SISTER - lost brothers	113321	I SEE GIRLS - studio b feat romeo	113273	SO GRIMY - so solid crew	113357
HEY YA - outkast	113176	ME MYSELF AND I - beyonce knowles	113293	MOSES - coldplay	113365
MANDY - westlife	113228	BABY I LOVE U - jennifer lopez	113353	STILL ON MY BRAIN - justin timberlake	113366
STUNT 101 - g-unit	113252	AS THE RUSH COMES - motorcycle	113360	LET YOUR HEAD GO - victoria beckham	113388
FEELING FINE - ultrabeat	113288	PREDICTABLE - delta goodrem	113352	GIVE ME YOUR LOVE - xtm feat chucky	113389
LADIES NIGHT - atomic kitten	113229	EVERYBODY CRIES - liberty x	113331	CAN'T DO RIGHT FOR ... - erin rocha	113391
MAD WORLD - gary jules	113303	GOD IS A DJ - pink	113283	SHOW ME ... - p diddy ft lenny kravitz ...	113395
AINT WHAT YOU DO - big brovaz	113251	NAKED - avril lavigne	113340	DON'T DISTURB ... - victoria beckham	113396

YES !!! All RINGTONES are MONOPHONIC and POLYPHONIC



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Java Game information line: 08712 225 322 National rate (UK)

PHONE 09066 416250 (UK) 1580 116910 (IRE €1.90 PER MIN)
SMS (UK): SEND FJAVA + NUMBER TO 87478 e.g : FJAVA 210117

GAMES COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 3410, 3510i, 5100, 6100, 6310i, 6610, 7210, 7250, 7650, 8910i SHARP: GX10 SIEMENS: C55, M50, MT50 MOTOROLA T720

CHART

LEAVE RIGHT NOW - will young	113195
JUMP - girls aloud	113163
WHITE FLAG - dido	112837
SUPERSTAR - jamelia	113055
HOLE IN THE HEAD - sugababes	113022
ANGELS BROUGHT ... - guy sebastian	113295
CHANGES - ozzy & kelly osbourne	113240
SOUNDS OF THE... - girls aloud	112332
CRASHED THE WEDDING - busted	113151
SWEET DREAMS - rachel stevens	112949
ME AGAINST ... - britney ft madonna	113140
TOO LOST IN YOU - sugababes	113286
ALL THE THINGS SHE SAID - tatu	112335
SEXED UP - robbie williams	113064
BE WITH YOU - beyonce knowles	113376
THAT'S HOW YOU LIKE IT - beyonce	113377
DANGEROUSLY IN LOVE - beyonce	113381
SIGNED SEALED DELIVERED - blue	113224
TROUBLE - pink	113042
DON'T TELL ME YOUR ... - s club 8	113356
I WONT CHANGE ... - sophie ellis bextor	113358
THE VOICE WITHIN - christina aguilera	113265
SLOW - kylie minogue	113084

DANCE

FLY ON THE WINGS OF LOVE - xtm	112705
PRETTY GREEN EYES - ultrabeat	112877
BE FAITHFUL - fatman scoop	113086
SUMMER JAM - ud project vs sunclub	113104
BOYS OF SUMMER - dj sammy	112387
RHYTHM IS A ... - snap vs cj stone	112485
MARIA - scooter	113030
LOVE ME RIGHT - angel city	113162
LONELINESS - tomcraft	112576
I CANT LET YOU GO - ian van dahl	112918
SHAKE YOUR ... - porn kings vs flip n fill	112463
RUBBERNECKIN - elvis presley	112864
FOREVER YOUNG - interactive	112458
BORN SLIPPY - underworld	113222
BLOW MY WHISTLE - dj alligator	111567
JUST A LITTLE ... - david guetta	113124
ADAGIO FOR STRINGS - william orbit	111591
BRAINWASHED CALL YOU - tomcraft	113194

ROCK

I BELIEVE IN A THING... - the darkness	112972
SWEET CHILD O MINE - guns & roses	111258
ROCK THE CASBAH - the clash	113382
WHOLE LOTTA LOVE - led zeppelin	113383
SHOULD I STAY OR ... - the clash	113378
ENTER SANDMAN - metallica	111371
BAT OUT OF HELL - meatloaf	111286
NOVEMBER RAIN - guns n roses	112596
SOMEDAY - nickelback	112967
LIVING ON A PRAYER - bon jovi	111376

HIP HOP

P.I.M.P - 50 cent	112599
WAT... - murphy lee ft jermaine dupree	113394
LETS GET ... - black eyed peas	113232
SMELLS LIKE FUNK - black eyed peas	113231
THE WAY YOU MOVE - outkast	113173
X GONNA GIVE IT TO YA - dmx	112617
REIGNS - ja rule	112679
21 QUESTIONS - 50 cent ft nate dogg	112582
FORGET ABOUT DRE - dr dre	111138
GOT SOME TEETH - obie trice	113041
INTO YOU - fabolous	112916
RIGHT THURR - chingy	112868
LIGHT ... - busta rhymes ft pharrell	113300
8 MILE - eminem	112376

R & B

WHERE IS THE LOVE - black eyed peas	112890
MAKE ME WANNA ... - blu cantrell	113182
CRASHIN A PARTY - lumidee feat n.o.r.e	113281
BABY BOY - beyonce ft sean paul	112933
BREATHE - blu cantrell feat. sean paul	112521
50-50 - lemar	113197
ALL I HAVE - jennifer lopez feat ll cool j	112359
FRONTIN - pharrell williams feat jay z	112855
THOIA THONG - r kelly	112948
IGNITION - r kelly	112588
I BELIEVE I CAN FLY - r kelly	113060
NEVER LEAVE YOU - lumidee	112774
FIGHTING ... - beyonce ft missy elliot	113236

REGGAE

TURN ME ON - kevin lyttle	113100
GET BUSY - sean paul	112634
LIKE GLUE - sean paul	112785
NO WOMAN NO CRY - bob marley	111331
PON DI RIVER - elephant man	113345

NU METAL

NUMB - linkin park	112886
BRING ME TO LIFE - evanescence	112651
MY IMMORTAL - evanescence	113277
FEELING THIS - blink 182	113189

FOOTBALL

YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE - liverpool	111351
SOCCER AM CATWALK - jean knight	112559
SOCCER AM NUTMEG FILES	113209
ARE YOU READY FOR LOVE? - elton john	112869

TV

SCOOBY DOO -	111142
WINNIE THE POOH	111613
BANANA SPLITS	112578
LOONEY TUNES	111151
RHUBARB AND CUSTARD	111623
THUNDERCATS - title music	111484
ITCHY AND SCRATCHY SHOW	111301

ESSENTIAL TONES

IN DA CLUB - 50 cent	112440
CRAZY IN LOVE - beyonce knowles	112707
SATISFACTION - benny benassi	112751
DILEMMA - nelly feat. kelly rowland	112221
HEAVEN - dj sammy	112229
IGNITION - REMIX - r kelly	112642
LOSE YOURSELF - eminem	112289
MOVE YOUR FEET - junior senior	112441
SMOOTH CRIMINAL - alien ant farm	111377
YOU'RE A SUPERSTAR - love inc	112329
CASTLES IN THE SKY - ian van dahl	111270
CAN'T GET YOU OUT ... - kylie minogue	111388
THE LOGICAL SONG - scooter	111965
BECAUSE I GOT HIGH - afroman	111454
MAKE LUV - room 5	112465
RESURRECTION - ppk	111550
LITTLE LESS ... - elvis vs jxl	111957
YEAR 3000 - busted	112344
HOW YOU REMIND ME - nickelback	111671
GOTTA GET ... daniel bedingfield	111545
JUST A LITTLE - liberty x	111935
WHENEVER WHEREVER - shakira	111661
TEENAGE DIRTBAG - wheatus	111186
KISS KISS - holly valance	111898
21 SECONDS - so solid crew	111341
NU FLOW - big brovaz	112232

THEMES

ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES	111369
THE SIMPSONS	111132
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	111121
EXORCIST	111871
PHOENIX NIGHTS	112364
ROCKY - main theme	111141
AXEL F - beverley hills cop	111601
MUPPETS	111134
GOOD BAD AND THE UGLY	111181
ROCKY - jogging theme	112481
THE A TEAM	111115
SEX AND THE CITY	111673
BENNY HILL	111139
JAMES BOND -	111119
STAR WARS	111125
HARRY POTTER	111548
JACKASS	112554
DIRTY DANCING	111249
KNIGHT RIDER	111127
THE MATRIX - rage against the ...	111848
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PINK PANTHER	111133

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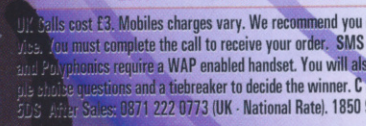
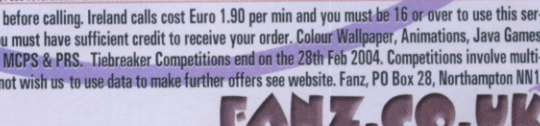
Colour Celebs

Nokia - Sony Ericsson - Sharp - Samsung



Backgrounds



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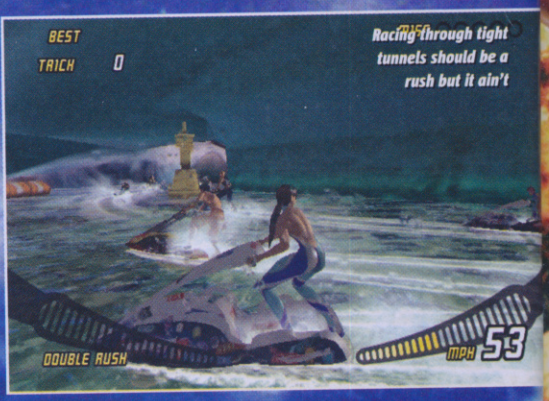
CARVE

We didn't know the Grand Canyon was flooded



Racing through tight tunnels should be a rush but it ain't

The Double Rush boost sends the screen blue

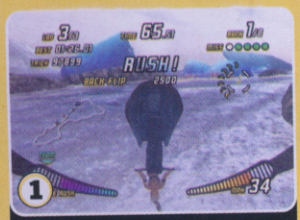
Fail to land a trick and you crash out

GAME INFO OUT: OUT NOW COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-8
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: TAKE 2 DEV: ARGONAUT
WWW.ARGONAUT.COM/MICROSITES/CARVE
REVIEWED ON XBOX

LOOK, NO HA... SPLOOSH!

Leaping from ramps and twirling in the air while clasping half a ton of Sea-Doo seems a bit unrealistic to us. But apparently you can do it in real life too, so who are we to argue?

The trick animations in Carve don't do much to convince though, as you can tell you're just triggering standard animation sequences rather than pulling dangerous and daring moves.



There are ramp tricks that you pre-wind, like these flips...

...and flat land tricks like handstands and body whips

There's always loads of text on screen that obscures the action

Animations are exactly the same each time, making it feel unrealistic

LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVES – WITHOUT THE PARROTS AND PEG LEGS

Here's a neat idea: enjoy all the fun of sploshing about on a Sea-Doo in the sun without having to worry about getting ripped off by local beach hawkers, or having chunks nibbled out of you by aggressive sea life.

Essentially Wave Race for Xbox, Carve captures the look and speed of Sea-Doo racing perfectly. The water is stunning, the locations, though clichéd, are pretty enough. Play is fast and there is the added element of team-based action and rivalries to spice things up. But the game's rubbish polygon-lite characters and an over-reliance on pulling tricks to gain speed boosts leaves a scuzzy film of skank-oil on the rolling water.

DIRTY BLOW HOLE

Your computer-controlled rivals are able to race much faster than you. This is both unfair and a very obvious, mechanical way of forcing you to risk blistering your fingers and pulling trick after trick just to keep your speed up. Tricks are easy enough and become monotonous quickly. But you're forced to keep at it to fill your Double Rush gauge. This meter gives you a super boost and enhanced handling for a brief time, until it resets, forcing you to repeat the process.

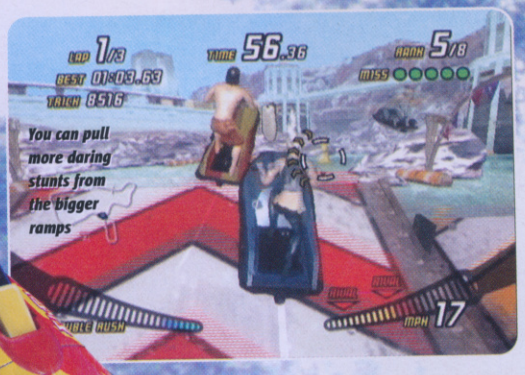
Essentially, this is Carve in a nutshell. Stretch that over 27 courses and only a couple of play modes, and the watery action wears pretty thin. Multiplayer fails too, as all players need to be the same standard or the ones who know the tricks win every time. Which ain't much fun. CVG

We're not into the characters at all

Follow the arrows around the buoys

The Big Head cheat mode makes an unwelcome return. Ugh

Land a trick and you get a brief speed boost



You can pull more daring stunts from the bigger ramps

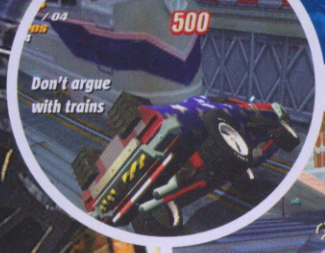
computer and video games VERDICT

Not a train-wreck of a game by any means, but it could be any other Sea-Doo racer ever made. Only with all the decent characters taken out and replaced by soulless mannequins. **Lee**

- Fantastic water and spray effects. Pffft!
- Play on Xbox Live with up to eight players
- New tricks are unlocked as you progress
- It's like any other Sea-Doo game
- The tricks are repetitive and bland
- Unspectacular animations and characters

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Wave Race (GC), Splashdown 2 (PS2)



Pick up a spanner and your car magically heals itself

Look for shortcuts and you'll also find power-ups

DESTRUCTION DERBY Arenas

AN ONLINE SMASH, A SINGLE-PLAYER WRITE-OFF

GAME INFO OUT: JANUARY 9 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4 (1-16 ONLINE) REVIEWED ON PS2

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: SONY DEV: STUDIO 33

HTTP://UK.PLAYSTATION.COM

The original Destruction Derby was a stone-cold classic – great-looking and simple to play. All you needed to do was choose a car, and go crashing into others... with some skill required of course.

When it first appeared on PSone it was one hell of an introduction to an exciting new era of games, yes indeed. The same basic formula is in place for this version, keeping the gameplay simple and the graphics knob cranked up as far as it can go. Most important of all, though, you can now ruck 'n' race via broadband online. Highlight the option in the main menu and you can join in or set up your own smashing session in no time.

Use every ramp available. Doesn't make a whole lot of difference, but it's funny

Since you'll now want to know who you're up against, even the offline game incorporates a few personal touches. Whereas in the old DD the emphasis was on the cars only, this time each motor is associated with a driver. This is important because to unlock more powerful cars in the offline game you'll need to identify your main rivals. If you outclass them with wild manoeuvres, or better yet smash them to hell, you get to steal their wheels.

A major way to impress online rivals is by rolling into the fray with a souped-up motor. As you progress through the one-player Championship your car gets sexed up with expensive parts. If you find yourself behind a guy whose Nitro Booster looks more like the Space Shuttle's, you know he's been putting the hours in.

"Hi, yeh it's me. Think I'll be home late tonight, the roads are terrible.

You're sure to have a great laugh playing DD Arenas, and it won't be hard to convince a few mates to join in the chaos. Even if you're not yet online with PS2 you can always play the slightly inferior four-player split-screen. There is a serious downside to the whole deal, however, in that the Championship is miserably easy to beat. We did the whole thing in one afternoon while simultaneously talking about mutant parasitical twins, so be warned. CVG

Not much of an ending, sadly. Your reward is kudos online – that's where it matters

HIGH OCTANE

Everything about DDA is 10 times wilder than the original, including the race circuits and especially the destruction derby arenas.

The guys responsible were definitely slurping the silly juice on this one! Cars get bounced around like pinballs and walloped by the moving parts of a giant clockwork arena. See? Wild!

Avoid the twirling clockwork battering ram, and ride the walls for extra speed. Power-ups are hard to retrieve here

A couple of guys fall foul of the catapulting hydraulic platforms. Mucho damage, mucho madness, mucho laughing

The final arena in the Championship features Godzilla and King Gidora. Seriously!

Games VERDICT

One of the wildest racers on PS2, and certainly one of the best-looking. It's a must-have for PS2 online, but in contrast the one-player game is a sickening waste of cash. **Paul**

- Freaky fun from the word go
- Looks and sounds, uh... The Business!
- Simple and perfect for online mayhem

- The Championship is too easily beaten
- If you're playing alone, it seems pointless
- Could be too silly for serious drivers...

7 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... The Getaway (PS2), Twisted Metal Black (Ps2)

GOTCHA FORCE™

CALL A FRIEND

Once you're up and running, one of the Gotcha Gang as it were, friends are always ready to accompany you in battle.

Depends on who you choose as to what kind of support your Force gets, so don't go rushing into it like our Jaime in a pie shop!

A cute girl called Mana has Gotcha Borgs that can replenish all your energy

When you've collected a new Gotcha Borg, why not check it out in detail

GAME INFO OUT: FEBRUARY 20 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4

ONLINE GAMING

PUB: CAPCOM DEV: CAPCOM R&D1

WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM/MINISITES/GOTCHAFORCE/

REVIEWED ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE

IF EVIL TOYS WANTED TO KILL YOUR FOLKS, ER, THESE KIDS HAVE THE ANSWER

If the last game you bought was Manhunt, then we're betting this is one of the last things you read this issue. We can't believe you're reading this now! So, shoo!

Sure enough, Gotcha Force is a total kids' game and proud of it. That's enough to turn your stomach unless you're, well, a total kid. But if you're something of a games aficionado there's credibility here, starting with the name Yoshihiro Sudo. This guy oversaw the likes of Power Stone and Capcom versus SNK, so he knows fighting games better than a dog knows its arse. And guess what? GF plays like Virtual On, with amazing robots beating on each other with all manner of fantastical weaponry and strategic use of battle arenas.

Even though you're playing with toys, the action is very cool

Spend your evenings and weekends shooting toy dragons up the a-hole

As your Force increases in number you'll need to allocate them space in Force Edit

She might be tiny but her rockets rock-ass! No escaping a blast like this

The Wire Gunner leaves a trail of plasma to ensnare the enemy Borgs

This drilling Gotcha Borg tunnels under the ground and bores into your head!

POKÉMON VIRTUAL ON

You're cast as Kou, a schoolboy who befriends a palm-sized robot at the site of a meteorite crash. Kou's not alone – all the kids in town have joined forces with similar so-called Gotcha-Borgs, and are being called upon to defend planet earth against an evil Gotcha-Borg army called Death Force. Your task is to collect the biggest army of Gotcha-Borgs and learn how to use them all. So it's sorta Robo-Pokémon, right down to a trading option, although the battles are much more dynamic.

All Gotcha-Borgs are handled the same way, only with wildly different results. In Gotcha Force this could be anything from a guided missile to a Yo-Yo. Differences between GBs also demand serious team management. Some are strong but slow, while others are weak but fast. You build Force points the more you fight, and these are 'spent' on the squad – you can have many weaker types, fewer strong types, or combinations. What it all boils down to in the end is a kind of frenzied collect 'em up. The majority of GBs are class acts to honour the best of Capcom R&D throughout the years. Of course the reality you must face, particularly as a GameCube owner, is that precious few others will own Gotcha Force, so you're likely to be fighting and collecting alone.

computer and video games VERDICT

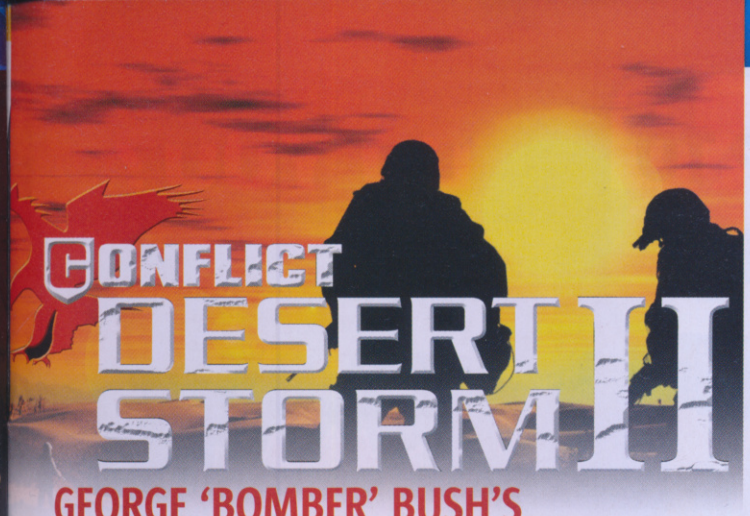
One of Capcom's most stylish efforts, and surprisingly enjoyable over a long period of time. Shame it's so childish and limited to GameCube release. **Paul**

- Wicked Gotcha Borg design keeps you amazed
- Strategy keeps you sharp
- If you can find someone to trade with, cool

- You'll be hard pressed to find fellow fans
- It is a game created with kids in mind
- Nowhere near as cool as Virtual On, but... hey

6 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... Pokémon Ruby (GBA) Virtual On (Dreamcast)



GEORGE 'BOMBER' BUSH'S FAVOURITE GAME HITS GAMECUBE

GAME INFO OUT: FEBRUARY 6 COST: £39.99 PLAYERS: 1-4
ONLINE GAMING
PUB: SCI DEV: PIVOTAL GAMES
WWW.CONFLICT.COM
REVIEWED ON NINTENDO GAMECUBE

SCi couldn't have planned it any better. Last year, the second Gulf War started, and Conflict Desert Storm II for PS2 and Xbox sold by the bucketload.

Then, just as the GameCube version appears, Saddam Hussein gets caught disguised as Santa Claus. If it wasn't for the fact it would be cashing in on loads of people dying, you'd think marketing executives were behind the whole thing.

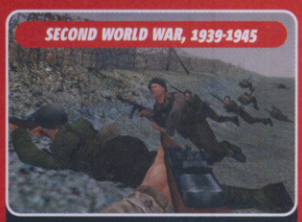
Your teammates react intelligently to threats, so you can rely on their cover

WAR... WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

It's bloody good for games, that's what. Those men didn't die for nothing.

Just think, if the following three conflicts hadn't happened, we'd probably be doing homework instead of blowing people up! Aiee!

SECOND WORLD WAR, 1939-1945

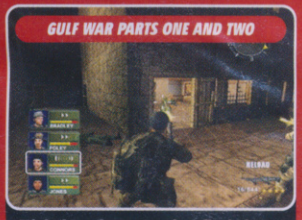


Granny's favourite, WW2 gave us the baddies everyone loves to hate, the Nazis. Take a look at Medal Of Honor

VIETNAM WAR, 1965-1975

The source of some bloody good movies and a couple of half-decent games. Check out Vietcong

GULF WAR PARTS ONE AND TWO

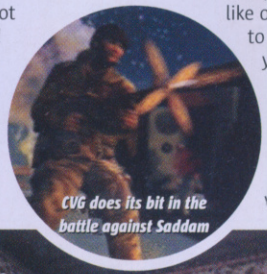


Might have been over in a flash, but at least we got to watch the explosions on TV. Do a reccie on CDS one and two

IRAQ AND ROLL

So while Hussein spilling his guts under the 'subtle prompting' of the Americans might hopefully mean an end to the bloodshed, we can still shoot Iraqi soldiers and not feel guilty with GC CDS II!

You know the score – you take control of four special ops soldiers, either SAS or Delta Force, and then blast your way through a collection of missions.



CVG does its bit in the battle against Saddam

You can be as cautious or as gung-ho as you like – it's an arcadey experience and it takes a lot more than a single bullet to kill you. But the best experience comes from using the tactical options at your disposal, like ordering your teammates to provide covering fire as you advance cautiously down another tracer-streaked street.

CRAZY GULF

The first GameCube CDS was reloaded with heaps of cool new features and improvements over the original. This isn't – it's just a straight port of PS2 and Xbox CDS II with added four-player co-op. But considering the quality of the original games, that's no bad thing. The balance of strategy and action is almost perfect and didn't need any reinforcement.

But to be honest we're more excited about what might happen before CDS III arrives. Another Gulf War? The apocalypse? Who knows?

Clearing buildings of mustachioed Saddam-monkeys is our favourite bit. Tense!

TANK YOU PLEASE

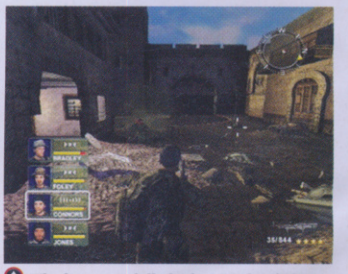
Most of the time it's you up against a bunch of Sadam's footsoldiers. But some of the best moments in CDS II occur when you come up against a big bloody tank.

You might as well squeeze out a fart on these babies for all the good using your guns will do you. Instead, get aerial on their ass and call in an airstrike.

There you are, just chilling out in Baghdad and they send a tank out to get you. Damned inhospitable bastards

Retreat to a nearby semi-detached villa and lock-on to the target with your nifty laser designator

And your native American pal will blow it up! Apache, Apache, jump on it!



Who loves rag-doll physics? We do! Limbs crumple and bodies fly everywhere

GAMES VERDICT

A carbon copy of the PS2 and Xbox versions, this is an enjoyable blend of light strategy and shooty action. Just about the best thing to come out of the Gulf since oil. **Graeme**

- Simple yet effective strategy...
- ...and action-packed shooting
- Topical setting lends gravitas
- Fairly short with limited replay value
- Too simplistic for hardcore war gamers
- Environments feel very enclosed

8 OUT OF TEN

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE... SOCOM (PS2), Ghost Recon (Xbox)

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P0402

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Contents subject to change without prior notice

IS IT PURE PUSSY GALORE OR A LOAD OF OLD BLOFELD?

JAMES BOND 007 EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

• ALL FORMATS RATED! •

Castlevania

CAN CLASSIC CASTLEVANIA GAMEPLAY CUT IT ON PS2?

• REVIEWED! CVG CRACKS THE WHIP! •

PLUS!

FINAL FANTASY X-2

Does X mark the spot for buried videogame treasure or is Square's sort-of sequel a fantasy or a 'pants'-asy? Arf

ARMED & DANGEROUS

Big guns, bigger explosions and flushed with toilet humour – stick that on up your U-bend and smoke it! Rated

KILL.SWITCH

Is this Switch a real strategic shooter turn-on or just another wall-hugging me-too shocker?

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2K4

Can they fix it? The vehicles are finally in but is it a return to form or bottom of the form for the series? Full review

DEUS EX

They've had a few months to polish it up since US release – has it made any difference? Trust CVG to bring you the truth

PLUS!

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computer and video **GAMES**

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'CVG SEGAGT COMP A'*

*CALLS COST NO MORE THAN 50P

RULE THE WORLD CIRCUIT!

Get your driving gloves on for the ultimate online racing package! Win an Xbox with Live!, a copy of Sega GT Online *and* a year's free subscription to Broadband from BT for online console gaming!

We all love a bit of road rage. Cutting up a granny-driven Micra at the traffic lights and flipping her the bird? Sweet!

But that's the problem with racing games – we can't stick it to the computer controlled cars as much as we'd like. Not so any more, because online racing means we can smoke real, living people who feel the sharp sting of humiliation. Wayhey!

Sega GT Online not only lets you drive loads of automotive masterpieces, but the online modes mean you can leave up to eleven other chumps chewing on your smoking rubber. Together with our pals at Sega, BT, and Microsoft we're offering you the awesome chance to get fully hooked up for Xbox online gaming so you can get out there and claim your pole position!

ADD A NEW DIMENSION TO YOUR GAMING EXPERIENCE WITH BT!

To celebrate the launch of 'Broadband from BT for online console gaming', a new broadband service for gamers, our friends at BT are offering three lucky winners the chance to win an Xbox, a copy of Sega GT Online, and one year's free broadband connection. You also get a router/modem worth £99, which connects your console to your broadband line.*

Broadband from BT for online console gaming is a broadband package specially designed for console gamers. Our prize offers up to 10x faster broadband connection than standard dial-up, plus a combined modem/router, which enables you to share your broadband connection between your PC and your games console. For more information visit www.bt.com/xboxlive.

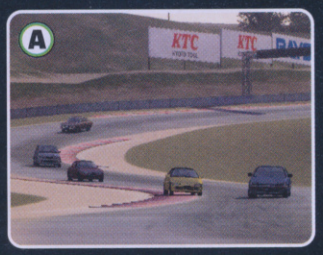
*BT Yahoo! Broadband for games console for one year – the prize includes activation, SpeedTouch 530 router, two line filters and 12 months rental. BT Yahoo! Broadband for games console is subject to availability and survey, and a BT line is required. Winners must be resident in the UK. The Closing date for this competition is February 11. No purchase is necessary.

BT

TO WIN: CAN YOU TELL A FORD GT WHEN YOU SEE ONE?

QUESTION: All you have to do to win this amazing online racing prize is to study the three races below. Identify which screenshot holds a Ford GT, the awesome update to the sixties classic and one of the best motors in Sega GT. Fill out the coupon or text us your answer, and you could take the chequered flag!

- A: .....screenshot 1
- B: .....screenshot 2
- C: .....screenshot 3



Is there a GT jostling for position among these motors?

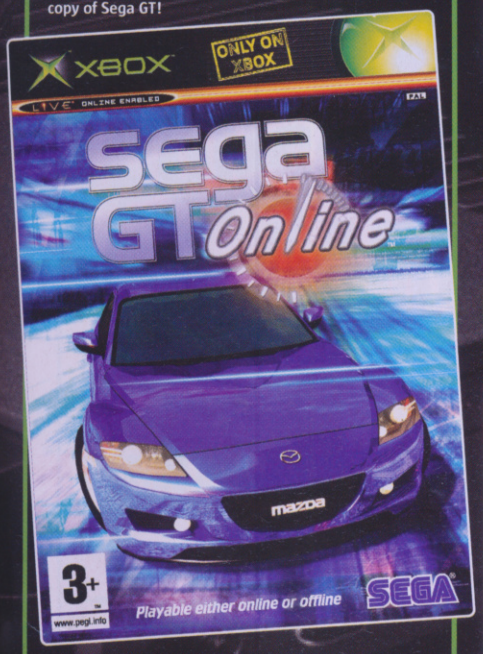
Or is this banana-flavoured beast Ford's growling supercar?

Is that a Ford GT taking the inside line over the rumble strips?

GENTLEMEN START YOUR ENGINES!

WIN ALL THIS...

Three lucky boy (or girl) racers will each win an Xbox with Xbox Live!*, a year's subscription to BT's Broadband for online gaming, a modem and a copy of Sega GT! Ten runners-up will each cruise off with a copy of Sega GT!



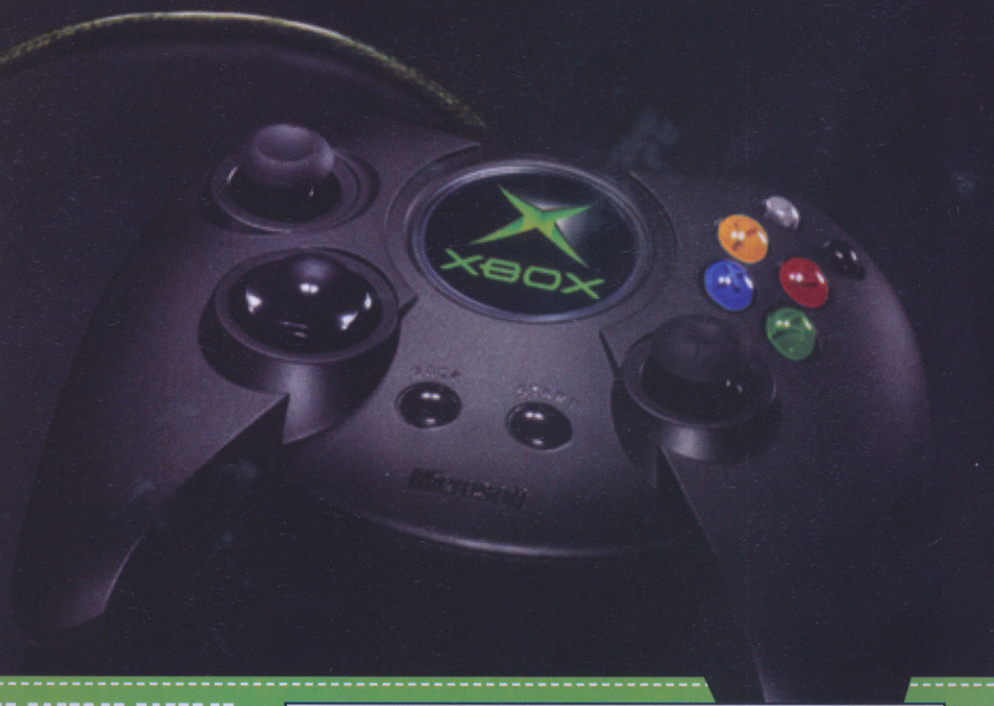
*Xbox Live! service requires a broadband connection and subscription charges may apply. The BT Broadband component of the prize is subject to terms and conditions (see BT box). No other prize will be offered.

GOING LIVE!

If you want to get into online console gaming, then you need to get into Xbox Live! We absolutely love Microsoft's wicked online setup since it allows us to destroy fellow gamers across the world, all from the comfort of our grimy, stinking bedrooms.

Sega GT is just one of a huge range of Xbox titles that have fantastic Live! modes to take your gaming experience to a whole new level. Think you're the best at a game? It's time to prove it!

XBOX LIVE



HOW TO ENTER – WIN! WIN! WIN!

So you think you know the answers to the questions do you? Smart guy, huh? Well don't get cocky, your work here is nowhere near done... Now you've got to fill in this coupon, hoping against hope that we draw your entry out of the editor's pants on Wednesday 11 February, 2004. It could be you, as they say on the lottery. Except on the lottery it never is you, and in CVG it sometimes is...

QUESTION 1

Tick the correct answer:

A.☐ B.☐ C.☐

XBOX LIVE

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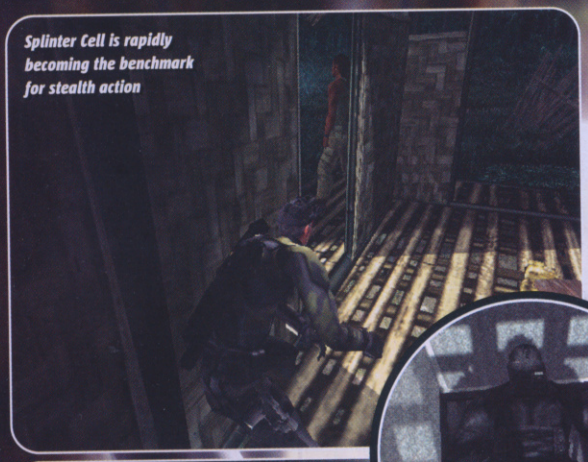
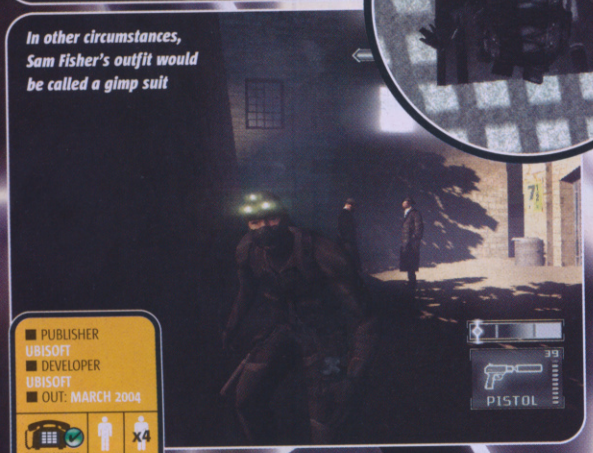


Splinter Cell is rapidly becoming the benchmark for stealth action



In other circumstances, Sam Fisher's outfit would be called a gimp suit

■ PUBLISHER
UBISOFT
■ DEVELOPER
UBISOFT
■ OUT: MARCH 2004

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IN A NUTSHELL

Sam Fisher is a crack stealth operative working for a shadowy US government agency. He must use all his gadgets and techniques to remain hidden while completing his mission – force is a last resort.

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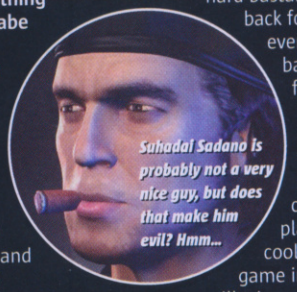
UPDATE!

SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW

SAM'S SECRET IS OUT IN THE OPEN

We've had over a year to realise that Sam Fisher is much more than a poor man's Solid Snake, and that Splinter Cell is anything other than some wannabe Metal Gear Solid.

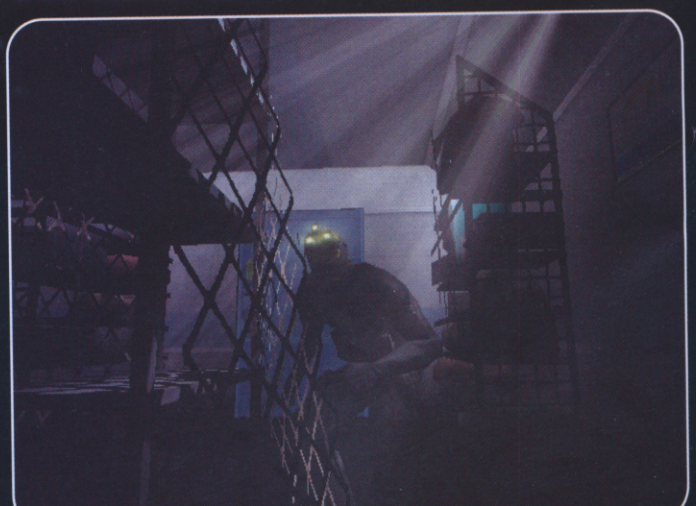
The original Splinter Cell was awesome, ask anyone. Last year we described it as an MGS2 beater, and the hardest great game in years. MGS defined a genre, but Splinter Cell ramped up the realism and stealth to mark its own territory. Totally submerging you in the role of covert-ops agent Fisher, the scenarios felt like more than just a game – plus you could sign up for duty on any platform, even PC and GBA.



Suhadal Sadano is probably not a very nice guy, but does that make him evil? Hmm...

The great news is the same will be true in every respect for the follow-up, Pandora Tomorrow. Trust us: when hard bastard hero Sam Fisher is back for action in March, everyone will kill to slip back into Sam's squeak-free boots.

We predict that the return of the finest stealth action we ever sweated out on console will have players talking about the coolest online multiplayer game in eons. First, though, you'll trip over your tongue 'cos of the single-player Pandora Tomorrow missions. And how do we know all this? 'Cos we've played it, and the adrenalin is still pumping through us.



Make any noise and the enemy might pick up your scent. Move like a panther on the prowl

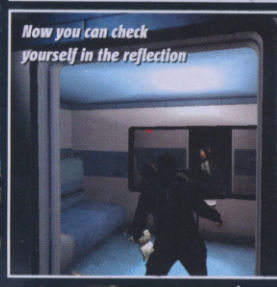
KNOCKOUT

Old favourite stealth moves return. New and more devious ones are to come!

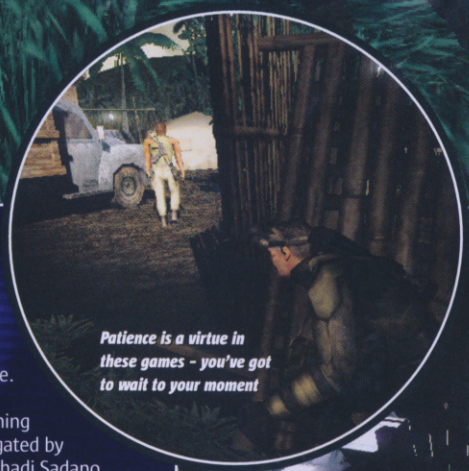
Eat some of that. Being pistol whipped around the face looks painful, but it's also a nice way of taking them down

Caught in the open? Better hope there's nobody in that truck!

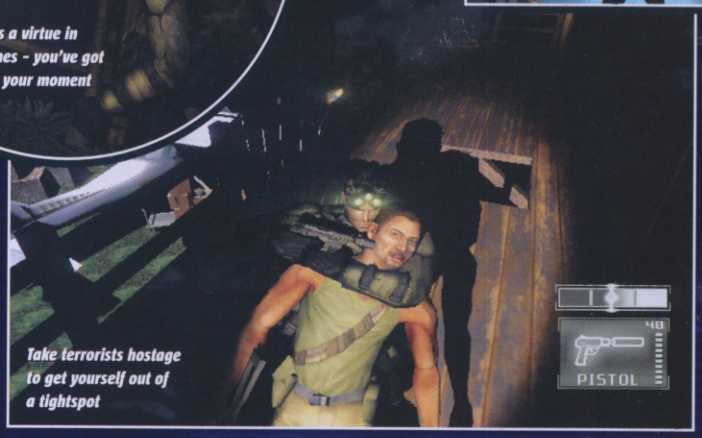
The developer is pushing the boundaries of lighting techniques



Now you can check yourself in the reflection



Patience is a virtue in these games - you've got to wait to your moment



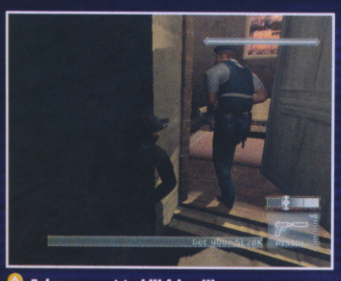
Take terrorists hostage to get yourself out of a tightspot

Since we're first to have played Pandora Tomorrow instead of just being told about it, we'll leave the finer plot details for another time. Fisher is infiltrating another globe-threatening terrorist scheme, instigated by the suitably sinister Suhadi Sadano. For now, though, let's get down to the business of the game.

SPREADING IT ABOUT

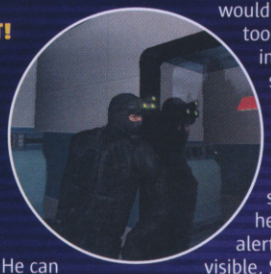
One of the hottest topics on the Splinter Cell forums concerns the linearity of the original. It became a priority for Ubisoft to improve this aspect for the sequel, meaning Sam now has more than one route through each level. But that doesn't mean easier options. This gameplay element coincides with another major change to Splinter Cell – that locations are more exotic and sometimes beautiful, but more importantly that many levels are played out in the open. The likes of a jungle village and the sprawling rooftops of Jerusalem replace corridors and indoor car parks.

Pandora Tomorrow will be a much more realistic and varied experience than the first Splinter Cell, and it's one Ubisoft hopes more people can enjoy. Even though the original was a big hit, it was considered too difficult by some players. And so PT is designed to be less difficult but still challenging. In other words, fewer 'brick walls' to stop you dead in your tracks but more tension to the whole of the experience. A key improvement is the revised alarm system that we'll tell you about over the page.



Take care not to kill friendlies

PICK UP THA MUSKET!



Faced with a mission more dangerous than the last, Sam has put in extra hours training and Third Echelon has provided their No1 agent with greater gadgetry. Sam's abilities now combine more athleticism with stealth. He can hang upside down with an enemy in his sights, and jump between narrow walls to reach high-placed ledges. Most impressive of all is the SWAT Turn that involves a quick twirl on the heel while dashing between the cover of one wall to another, across a doorway for example. It's hard to believe Sam is almost invisible while doing this, but it looks wicked cool since it was influenced by a Tom Cruise stunt from Mission Impossible.

Cruise's character Ethan Hunt would envy Sam Fisher's toolkit. Key to Sam's inventory is the significantly upgraded SC-20K assault rifle that can be equipped on the fly. His FM-7 handgun is now fitted with a laser sight too, but while it helps with accuracy, it can alert the enemy because it's visible. Stealth-wise, the Optic Cable, which previously could only be used to scope beneath doors, can poke through trap doors above or below, and be switched from Night Vision to Thermal Vision. This is helpful because Sam faces few situations that can be entered before a thorough recon.

Now turn the page to open Pandora's box, and hope your skin doesn't fall off... we're going to tell you what to expect from four of the eight new one-player missions! TURN OVER NOW!

MAN ON A MISSION

We were feeling a bit 'Sam Fisher' this month, so we went on a mission to France to meet the developers and get our hands on Pandora Tomorrow – both the one-player, and multiplayer games.

Four of the one-player levels were there to explore, including what will be the first – a speeding train on its way from Paris to Nice. We're not sure where the US Embassy in Indonesia, jungle village or Jerusalem levels fit in with the story, but we learned there are eight missions, which should last as least as many hours as the original.

The US embassy in Indonesia could be a terrorist target in real life – scary!

2AM TO NICE
START ON THE RIGHT TRACKS

CIA operative Norman Hoth is on the 2am from Paris to Nice. So what? He's suspected of being a double agent.

Sam is helicopter-dropped onto the roof of the speeding loco, and must ID Hoth to confront him. Rule number one: don't stand up, or 180mph winds will carry Sam into the night! Assuming you're not that stupid, your first puzzle is a trap door – time to try out the new optic cable for a look-see. It takes you into the guard truck, complete with bikes, but no guard... he's in the next carriage. You can distract him by making a noise, perhaps give a whistle, then use a Split Jump between carriages and watch the dopey guard investigate the noise. If you want, you can drop on his head to knock him out – you'll need to buy time to inspect the compartments. Hoth, it turns out, has a prosthetic leg. The Thermal Vision on the optic cable can spot this (the false limb shows up blue). Of course, Hoth is not about to give up. Sam must listen in on his phone call, but armed guards will take you down if you go marching along the aisles in a stealth suit! Sam crawls beneath the train, until he finds a trap door to regain entry. Next, he can take out the lights and sneak through the carriage using Night Vision, or open the door and risk shimmying on the outside of the train. If you make it safely, point Sam's laser mic at the phone booth so that Third Echelon can investigate the conversation.

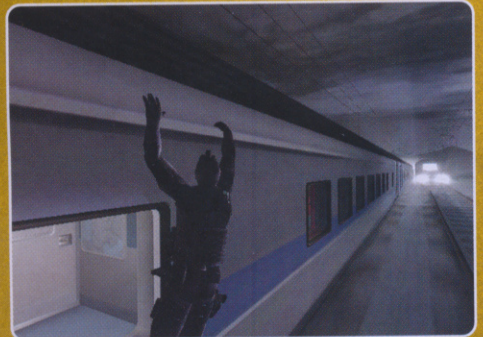
Take out the lights and use Night Vision

Looking for a way in. Don't stand or you'll get blown away

The Split Jump is back, and Sam's still got the knack

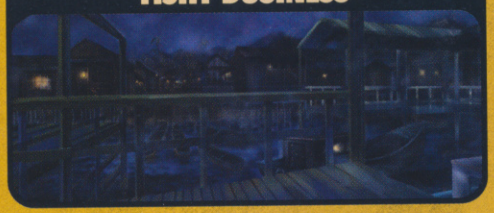
The guard room – but no guard! Checking tickets?

It doesn't seem fair to kill him, but let him know who's boss



First time this oncoming train rumbles by you crap your pants!

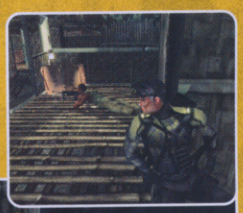
US EMBASSY – INDONESIA
FISHY BUSINESS



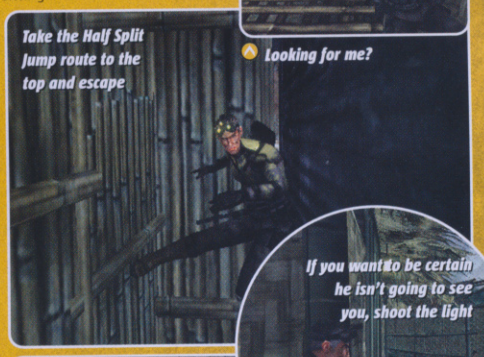
Hostages are being held at the US Embassy in a small Indonesian town. You begin at the docks, surrounded by amazingly realistic water and rickety wooden buildings.

A swift death-slide into the heart of the village places you in immediate danger of being spotted. The ground is all hard-packed mud, and there are mines underfoot that you can only detect using Thermal Vision. Just don't step on them. In fact, don't even set one of them off or you'll alert everyone! If you fancy it, you can hang-crawl from overhead wires, and experiment with Sam's new upside down shooting.

There are two more set pieces left in this level. First up, a guard keeping watch while sitting in his chair beneath a solitary light bulb. Sam must use his SWAT Turn across an open gate to position himself to take out the bulb then stranglehold the disoriented patrolman. He'll tell you where the hostages are, and you must ID the terrorists so that Third Echelon can follow up. Under no circumstances can you kill any of the terrorists – you'll find out why later. To reach the Extraction Point you'll need to master the Half Split jump inside some sort of chute, which is a cool set-piece exit.

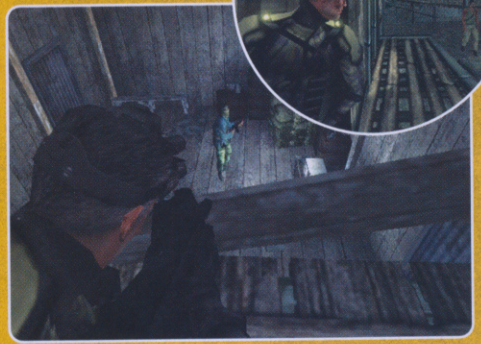


Looking for me?



Take the Half Split Jump route to the top and escape

If you want to be certain he isn't going to see you, shoot the light



You must complete the Indonesia mission before sunrise

SWAT TURN

This is a genuine SWAT move, and keeps Sam invisible while crossing a doorway

The animation is awesome, and here are the frames to prove it!

The move is based on a trick Tom Cruise pulls out in Mission Impossible

HALF SPLIT JUMP

This new move allows Sam to leap between walls, if they're close enough

It's a swish manoeuvre, and once you get the hang of it, it'll get you out of many a tight spot, we can tell you

JUNGLE VILLAGE
CURIOUS CROPS

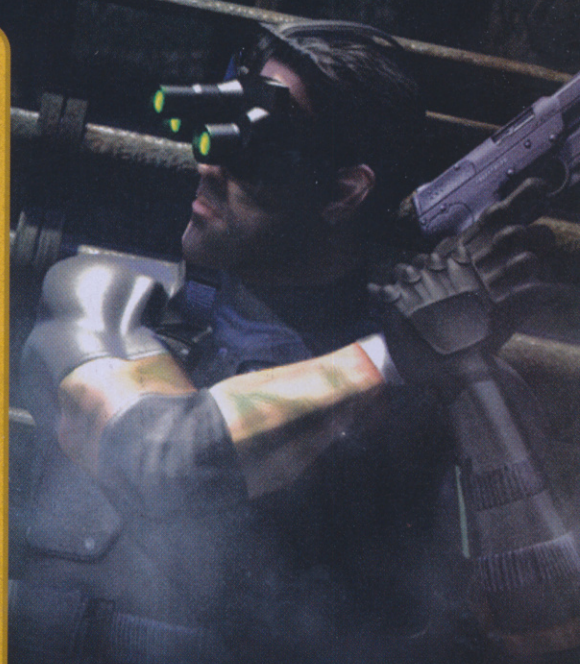
Here's a very bright example of the new open-air levels. First thing you need to be aware of is the subtle time restriction placed on this operation.

The sun is rising in real time, meaning that your cosy hiding places within the shadows won't be sticking around for very long. Thankfully, you have the pleasant smelling crops to duck into, but watch how quickly you move because the stems waver like crazy when disturbed. Marijuana isn't the only thing planted here – there are booby-traps too. The controller vibrates very gently when you are close enough to pick up the hum of a device. Careful not to set one off, or you'll be wasted – in a bad way. Another helpful thing about the crops is that you can hide bodies in them. Pay attention to Sam's shadow in this level, because the bright sunlight makes it so visible. On the other hand, you can use the glare of the sun to blind the enemy so they don't see you coming. And you can bet there are a couple of twigs to be stepped on too around these parts... so we trod very carefully on fallen leaves.

The long grass muffles your boots and offers good cover

Sam's new outfit helps him blend with the surroundings

He suspects you're there – have you got the balls to stay cool?



JERUSALEM
BIBLICAL BEDLAM

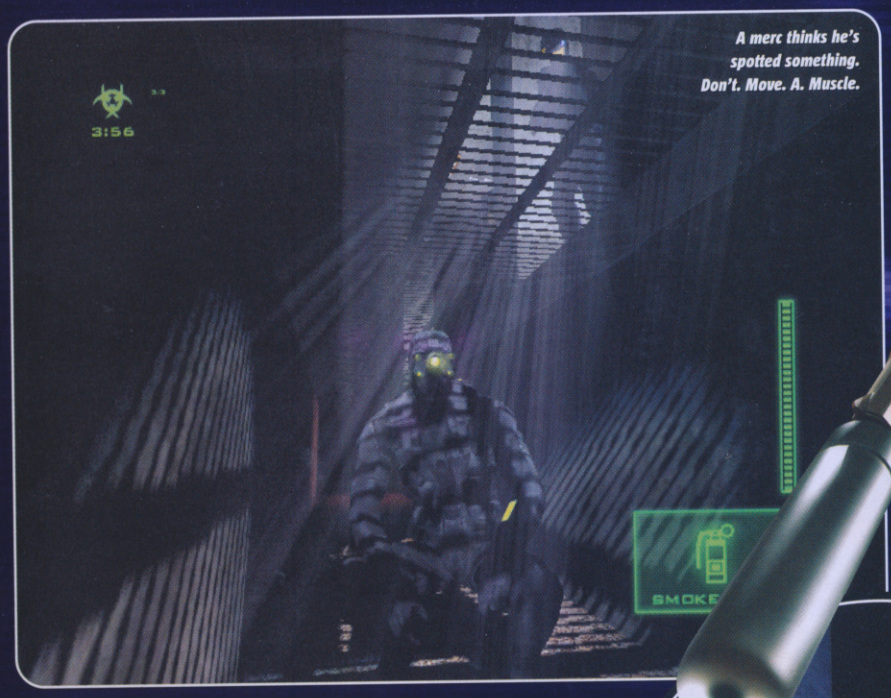
The Jerusalem level has a similar theme to the CIA building from the last game. Sam is to retrieve his SC-20K rifle, but must remain completely undetected.

There are many spies operating in Jerusalem, including CIA agents, so you must be extra vigilant. At street level you have chances to listen in on many conversations between NPCs, perhaps offering vital clues. The shadows are your friend, but open doorways and patrolling guards are everywhere. If you knock someone out, make sure you hide them well.

Jerusalem offers a staggering display of game design and detail, in particular at the stage where Sam is peering from a high window to the town below. It looks like a movie backdrop, but seen through binoculars you notice that it's all fully modelled and you can explore any of it. If you're unsure of where to go, let the light and shadow guide you – think of the coolest route to take and you'll be right.

Sam is showing a lot of nerve interrogating under a street lamp!

Sam's SC-20K rifle is around here somewhere

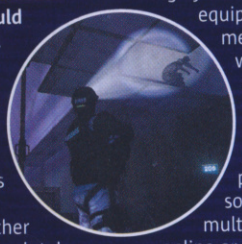


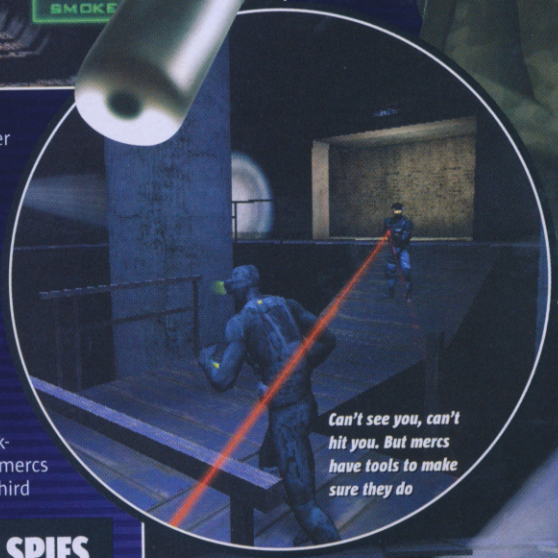
A merc thinks he's spotted something. Don't. Move. A. Muscle.

SOME KINDA ICING SOME KINDA CAKE

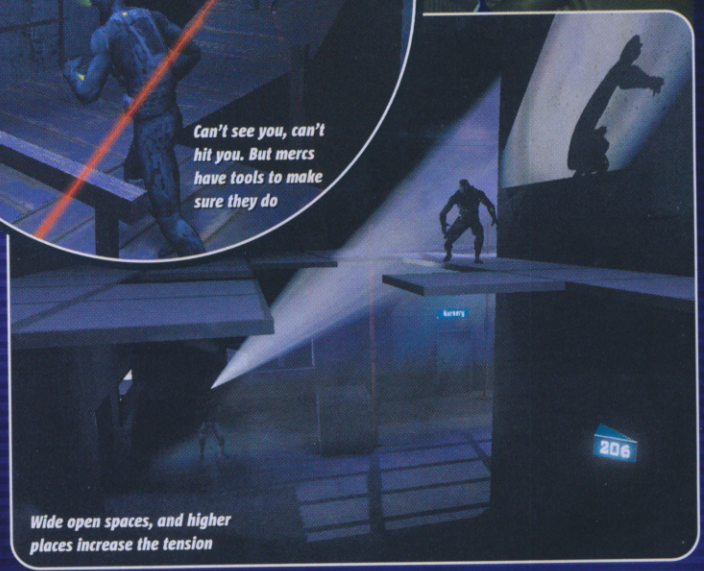
We've saved what could be at least an equal best part until last.

We would have been happy with Pandora Tomorrow as a classy new one-player Splinter Cell campaign. In fact, it is that and huge amounts more. Specifically the mother of stealth multiplayer – absolutely unique to Pandora Tomorrow, and a major reason to pre-order this game, ASAP. During the one-player mission, Sam encounters highly trained, heavily equipped mercenaries who make the guards in Splinter Cell 1 seem like kids playing at soldiers. In the multiplayer game, online or via system link-up, you're up against the mercs as a spy for a division of Third Echelon called Shadownet. As a spy the gameplay is similar to how you control Sam, but the killer twist is that not only can you play as one of the mercs, but when you do, you play the game from a first-person viewpoint!



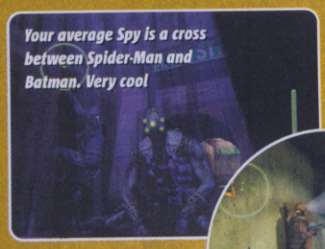


Can't see you, can't hit you. But mercs have tools to make sure they do

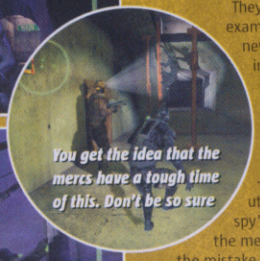


Wide open spaces, and higher places increase the tension

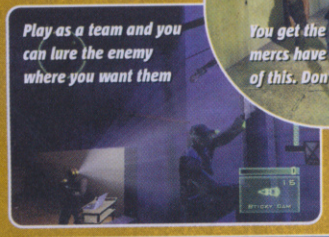
SHADOWNET SPIES



Your average Spy is a cross between Spider-Man and Batman. Very cool



You get the idea that the mercs have a tough time of this. Don't be so sure



Play as a team and you can lure the enemy where you want them

At first you'll feel at home with these guys, because they're basically Sam Fisher with a few extra moves to suit multiplayer. They can back-flip off walls for example, something Sam would never do. Like Sam, spies work in the shadows and can climb just about anywhere, cling to drains, or hang from pipes to remain undetected. It's like being Spider-Man a lot of the time – Spider-Man with Batman's utility belt, in any case. A spy's job is to anticipate what the mercs will do, and try to force the mistake. Just like Sam. If things get too close, drop on their heads or knock them out with an electric shock. You also have mines – Proximity or Motion Sensitive – and spy cams to monitor hot spots.

Your mate is looking for an escape route, and you're it

MERCENARY MADNESS

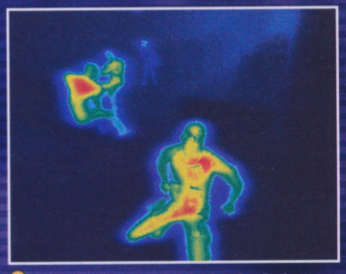
There are currently four areas, in which up to four people can play using a choice of four multiplayer modes. Got that? You can set things up how you like, provided at least one person is the opposition. If you're smart, you could try to outwit your mates one versus three, for example. The mercs are here to guard sealed metal boxes, secured with passcodes that must be changed every 24 hours. Our friends the spies are here to stop the reset, and retrieve the green tubes contained in these boxes. The game modes vary from the Capture the Flag style 'Extraction', where the tubes must be hauled to the exit, to a more straightforward 'Neutralization' mode in which you prevent the reset by whatever means. More complicated rules govern 'Sabotage' and 'ID Attack' because both involve using something other than the containers to succeed

If you're gonna go climbing, keep quiet

EAT THIS!

Sam has a way of chucking grenades that makes you smirk

Time your moves to coincide with rail-side lights to avoid being seen



You'd think a Predator had arrived when you switch to thermal imaging

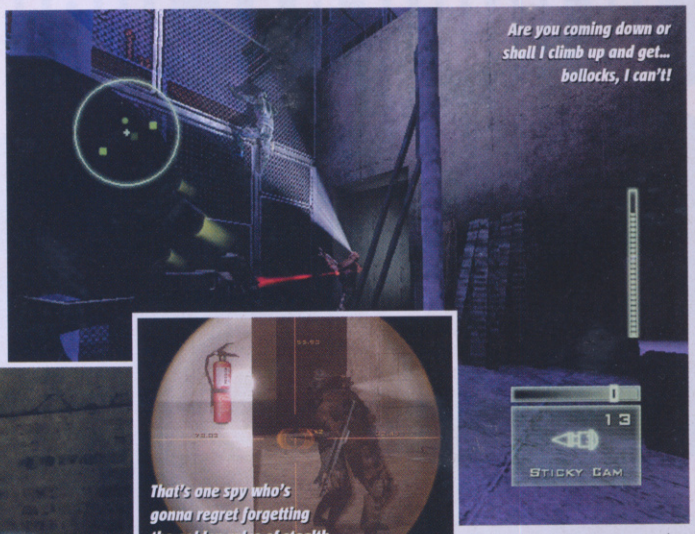
It's good to know when it's all over Sam will be able to retire to the circus

THE MERCS – ARGUS INC. (ARMED GUARDIAN SERVICES)

These guns-for-hire guys are fictitious, but based on real Private Military Corporations that exist in the US.

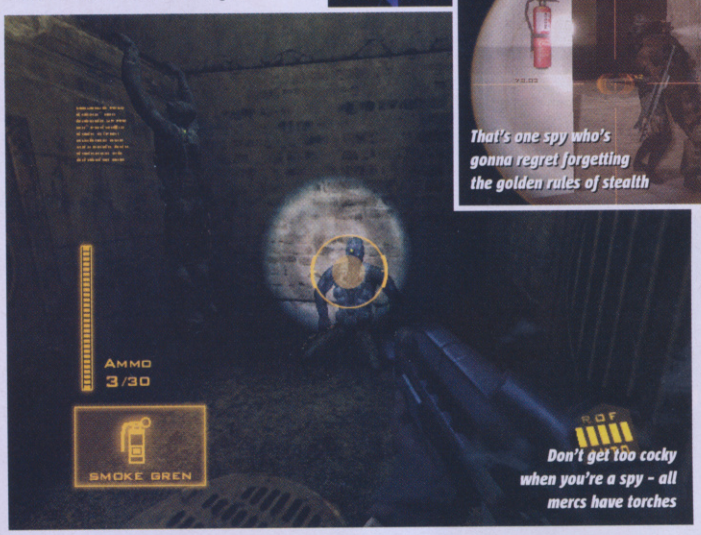
They're equipped with everything they need to trap, say, a Shadownet Spy, which means they're loaded with gadgets too. They have heavy firepower, torches, motion trackers and two types of vision mode, custom-built to track spies.

Motion Detection blurs the scene red, but movement will create a rectangle of space around that area. Electro Detection blurs the scene grey, and electronic devices are is lit up like beacons. The mercs' simplest gadget, but somehow comedic in its effectiveness, is the torch. It's such a laugh in multiplayer to catch a smart-ass spy in the shadows with a humble flash light!



Are you coming down or shall I climb up and get... bollocks, I can't!

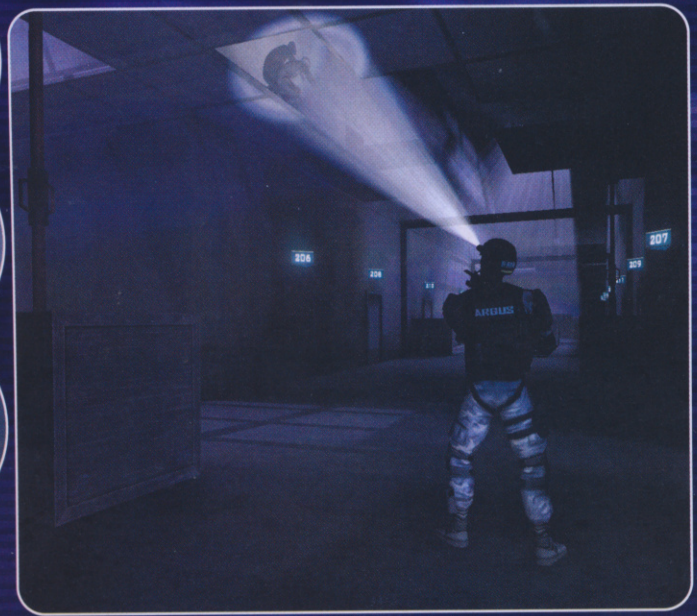
That's one spy who's gonna regret forgetting the golden rules of stealth



Don't get too cocky when you're a spy – all mercs have torches

There are so many reasons why this multiplayer set-up is cool. Play as a merc and you feel powerful because of the weaponry, and the ability to give chase while opening up. Play as a spy and you'll love working with your buddies to lure gung-ho mercs to their doom.

Yet, multiplayer mode's crowning glory has to be with the voice communication. If you use a sniper sight or zoom with binoculars you can listen in to what the other team is saying. You can also take out the transmitter to block rival communication altogether. Finally – and you won't believe this – when taking a merc hostage, you can talk directly into his ear, making him do your bidding. Imagine how chilling this will be if it happens online! Boggle.



If he had any sense the merc would open fire before spidey gets away

Those two could go on telly with an act like that – it's a human totem pole

CVG OPINION

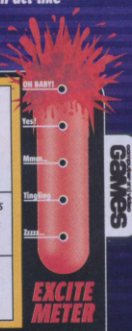
We didn't expect to be amazed a second time, but we were totally floored! It's got superb, tense atmosphere and a genius multiplayer mode. **Paul**

WE LOVE

- Being stealthy in cool new ways
- 3rd person versus 1st person in multiplayer

WE HATE

- That we can't play until March
- That GC online might be a problem



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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE FREE GAMING NATION

PERIPHERAL VISIONS

SHOOTING, DRIVING, FISHING, DANCING – WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE PERIPHERAL?

The boom in popularity in dance mats is down to one of two things: either incontinent people are too embarrassed to buy proper splash mats for their pee, or people actually like dancing in front of their TV.

With Donkey Konga also on the way (calm down, it's crap) there's little doubt we're in the middle of a golden age for peripheral-dependent games. Here's Cackman's exclusive look at the next batch of winners:

BAD PARENT: SUPERMARKET SPECIAL (PS2)

■ **Peripheral: Slightly smaller than life-size replica child with dried bogeys on its face**

As soon as the child opens its mouth, you hit it. There's a smack sensor on the doll's bottom, and one on each hand. An in-built microphone picks up your hysterical screams of "SHUTCHAMOUF", and you get a point for every shopper that tuts at you with unconcealed disgust.

THE WRONG CHECKOUT QUEUE (PS2)

■ **Peripheral: Bar-code scanner**

There are two people in your queue, and eight in the checkout next to you. By swiping your hand over the sensor, you 'scan' an item. But you have to go slowly enough so the other checkout queue moves faster, but not so slow that people leave your queue to join the other. It's a balance only the pros manage.

ACTUAL FACTORY JOB 2004 (PSONE)

■ **Peripheral: A single red button**

You work in a factory that puts labels on sauce bottles. Every second, a bottle arrives on a conveyor belt. You press the button to label it. Another appears. Press the button again. You get a 15-minute break every four hours, £12,000 a year, and do the nightshift one week in three.

NINTENDO ADVISOR (GC)

■ **Peripheral: Life-sized brick wall**

The idea is to try and get Nintendo to do something sensible, like release a new Mario game or something. When Mr Iwata constantly replies, "CONNECTIVITY!" you repeatedly bang your head on the brick wall. Eventually, you're so concussed you buy an exact GBA copy of a SNES game you already own.

PIETOY (XBOX)

■ **Peripheral: Giant-sized apple pie**

Turns out the Americans were allergic to EyeToy. Even stretching to put the camera on top of the TV was more exercise than they could ever manage. So Microsoft invents PieToy, where you get points for stuffing a giant spongy cherry pie peripheral into your sweaty, fat American face.

PEE PATTERNS PRO (PS2)

■ **Peripheral: Flesh-coloured tube that works kind of like a lightgun**

Into the first-person view appears a stream of yellow liquid. There are two objectives: guide the cigarette end along the urinal without the guys standing either side hitting you, and also to flush away any of the thick blue toilet bleach clinging gamely to the urinal's steep surface.

SAMMY SENSE

Sega's new majority shareholder lays down some ground rules

■ No pets in the office. All those spray-painted hedgehogs in red running shoes have to go

■ Ten million dollars to make a game about a man in the Eighties who has to drive a forklift for hours is NOT good value

■ You better get some Virtua Fighters in that Cyber Generation RPG quick, or all of AM2 gets the sack

■ Microsoft will buy any old rubbish. Start getting new Bug and Clockwork Knight games ready for Xbox

■ Stop straining out characters like a constipated person forces out a turtle. An ECHIDNA? What the hell is that?

WRITE TO CACKMAN

You lot must have ideas. Questions. Theories. Write to Cackman at the usual address, and the best will win an awesome prize! Senders of anything Cackman considers to be crap will be subjected to GBH in text form on this very page. Come on! You want to be famous, don't you? What else have you got to live for in your stupid little lives?

Cackman's opinions aren't necessarily those of CVG

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Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
Breath of Fire
Crash Bandicoot XS
Crash Nitro Kart
Donkey Kong Country
Dragon Ball Z: Taiketsu
Dragonball Z: L. of Goku 2
Dragonball Z: Leg. of Goku
Ecks vs Sever
Ecks vs. Sever 2: Ballistic
Final Fantasy Tactics
Finding Nemo
Fire Pro Wrestling A
Golden Sun
Golden Sun 2
Harry Potter & Phil.'s Stone
Leg. of Zelda: Link to Past
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Mario Advance 4
Medal of Honor: Infiltrator*
Mega Man Battle Network 2
Pokemon Ruby
Pokemon Sapphire
Sonic Advance 2
Spyro: Season of Ice
Street Fighter Alpha 3
Super Mario Advance 2
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Sacred Cards
Yu-Gi-Oh!: World Wide Ed.
Zelda: A Link to the Past
Plus Many More...

GAMEBOY COLOR

Dragonball Z Leg.S.Warriors
Harry Potter & Phil.'s Stone
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Pinball
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Trading Card
Pokemon Yellow
Super Mario Bros DX
Zelda: Links Awakening DX
Zelda: Oracle of Ages
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Plus Many More...

NINTENDO64

Diddy Kong Racing
Goldeneye
Perfect Dark
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Plus Many More...

DREAMCAST

CAPCOM vs SNK
Four Wheel Thunder
Sonic Adventure
Spiderman
Tomb Raider 4: Last Revel.
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Plus Many More...

PC

Airport Tycoon
Alpha Centauri
Broken Sword 2
Broken Sword: S. Dragon
Champ. Manager '03/'04
Champ. Manager '99/'00
Com. & Conq.: R. Alert 2
Com. & Conq.: Yuri's Rev.
Commandos 2
Delta Force
Delta Force: B. Hawk Down
Empires: Dawn of M.World
Euro Manager 03/04*
FIFA 2004
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Half Life 2*
Halo
Heroes of M.& M.3: A.Blade
I.G.I.2: Covert Strike
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Max Payne 2
Medal of Honor: Pacific As.*
Medal of Honor: Sp'head
Pirates of the Caribbean
Red Alert 2
Rollercoaster Tycoon
Sims: Deluxe
Sims: Superstar
Sims: Unleashed
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Academy
The Sims: Makin' Magic
Theme Hospital
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
XIII (Thirteen)
Plus Many More...

PS-ONE

Alone in the Dark 4
Beyblade
Broken Sword 2
C-12 Final Resistance
Chase the Express
Digimon World
Digimon World 2
Digimon World 3
Dino Crisis
Dracula The Last Sanctuary
Driver 2
Evil Dead: Hail to the King
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
Final Fantasy 7
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy Origins
Gran Turismo
Harry Potter & Phil.'s Stone
Hidden & Dangerous
In Cold Blood
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Medal of Honor
Metal Gear Solid
Parasite Eve 2
Resident Evil
Shadowman
Silent Hill
Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol
Spiderman
Tekken 3
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4: Last Revel.
Tomb Raider 5: Chronicles
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden M.
Plus Many More...

GAMECUBE

Ace Golf
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Billy Hatcher and Giant Egg
Blood Omen 2
Burnout
Crash Nitro Kart
Def Jam Vendetta
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Eternal Darkness
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
F-Zero GX
Gladius
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hulk
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Leg. of Zelda: Master Quest
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Luigi's Mansion
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Mario Sunshine
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metroid Prime
Minority Report
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Mystic Heroes
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Pikmin
Rayman 3
Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
Reckoning, Hunter
Reign Of Fire
Resident Evil
Resident Evil Zero
Rogue Leader
Scorpion King
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Skies of Arcadia Legends
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Adventure DX
Splinter Cell
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
SSX 3
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Rebel Strike
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Starfox Adventures
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Smash Bros Melee
The Great Escape*
The L. of Zelda: WindWaker
The Scorpion King
The Sims: Bustin Out*
Thirteen
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Undergr'nd
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
Viewtiful Joe
Wind Waker
WWE Wrestlemania X8
WWE Wrestlemania XIX
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
X-Men: Next Dimension
Zelda: Master Quest
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Zelda: The Wind Waker
Plus Many More...

X-BOX

Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
Alter Echo
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Broken Sword: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Champ. Manager '01/'02
Championship Manager '02
Club Football
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart
Crimson Skies
Dino Crisis 3
FIFA 2004
Freedom Fighters
Ghost Recon
Gotham Racing
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: V. City
Great Escape
Halo
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
House of the Dead 3
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Knights of the Old Republic
Kung Fu Chaos
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Max Payne
Max Payne 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2: Subst.
Midnight Club 2
Mike Tyson Boxing
Need for Speed Undergr.
Pirates of the Caribbean
Project Gotham Racing
Project Gotham Racing 2
Rainbow Six 3
Rallisport Challenge
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Rocky
Rollercoaster Tycoon
Rolling
Secret W. Over Normandy
Sega GT 2002
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Soul Calibur 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Academy
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
St.Wars: Knights Old Rep.
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
The Great Escape
The Hobbit
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Thing
Thirteen
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Total Club Manager 2004
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
Worms 3D
WWE Raw 2: Ruthless Aggr.
XIII (Thirteen)
Xtreme Beach Volleyball
Zapper
Plus Many More...

PLAYSTATION 2

A = 01
Age of Empires 2
Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
Alone in the Dark 4
Angel of Darkness
B = 02
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Batman Vengeance
Battlestar Galactica
Big Mutha Truckers
Blade 2
BMX XXX
Broken Sword: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
C = 03
Club Football
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash Nitro Kart
D = 04
Dark Cloud 2
Dead to Rights
Def Jam Vendetta
Desert Storm
Desert Storm 2
Devil May Cry 2
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 3
Dynasty Warriors 4
E = 05
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Monkey Island
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
F = 06
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Final Fantasy 10
Fire Blade
Fire Warrior
Freedom Fighters
G = 07
Getaway
Gladius
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Great Escape
H = 08
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Headhunter
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hulk
I = 09
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
J = 10
Jak & Daxter
Jak 2: Renegade
James Bond 007: Nightfire
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis
L = 12
Lara Croft: Ang.of Darkness
Legends of Wrestling 2
Legion: Leg. of Excalibur
LMA Manager 2003
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
M = 13
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Manhunt
Matrix, Enter the
Max Payne
Max Payne 2
Maximo
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club 2
N = 14
Naval Ops:Warship Gunner
Need for Speed Undergr.
NHL 2004
Nightfire
No One Lives Forever
O = 15
Onimusha: Warlords
P = 16
Premier Manager 2002
Primal
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Pro Evolution Soccer 3
Project Zero
R = 18
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Red Faction
Red Faction 2
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Robot Wars
Run Like Hell
S = 19
Scorpion King
Secret W. Over Normandy
Seek and Destroy
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims
Smackdown! 4: S.Y.Mouth
Smackdown! 5: H.C.T.Pain
SOCOM 2: US Navy Seals
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Reaver 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
SSX 3
Starsky & Hutch
State of Emergency
Stuntman
Syberia
T = 20
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway
The Italian Job: L.A. Heist
The Return of the King
The Sims: Bustin Out*
The Thing
The Two Towers
Thirteen (XIII)
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
TOCA Race Driver
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Total Club Manager 2004
True Crime: Streets of LA
V = 22
Vice City, Grand Theft Auto
W = 23
Warhammer: Fire Warrior
Way of the Samurai 2
WWE Smackdown!: HCTP
X = 24
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's R.
Y = 25
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Mnst. 2
Yu-Gi-Oh! D. of Roses
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